

Clark: Time ripe for peace effort

DAMASCUS (R) — Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clark arrived in Damascus Sunday saying the time was ripe to try to bring peace to the Middle East. Clark, whose country and Syria were members of the 28-nation coalition which fought Iraq, told reporters on arrival he would discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict and other issues. "I am sure that the great opportunity that was created when we worked together in the coalition is extended in the future," said Clark, the first Canadian minister in visit Damascus in eight years. "I think this kind of cooperation which was carried several days ago indicates there is an opportunity the nations of the coalition can work together in the future. Canada is interested in exploring how that can be done." Clark said the most important issue following the end of the Gulf war was how to bring peace to the Middle East and solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. "There are some immediate challenges in the post-war period — some concerning peacekeeping, some concerning economic development and security arrangements in the region," he said.

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Indian troops storm mosque, kill imam

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — Paramilitary troops chasing Muslim militants in a Kashmir town stormed a mosque and killed its imam and four other people Sunday, residents said. They said troops of the Central Reserve Police force also ransacked the mosque in the pre-dawn raid in Baramullah, 45 kilometres northwest of Srinagar. The residents, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the troops killed the mosque's spiritual leader, Imam Riyaz Ahmad. They identified the other victims as state police constable Abdul Rasheed and three more Muslim men, Nazir Ahmad, Abdul Ghani and Basheer Ahmad. The residents who were contacted by telephone did not have further details. Government officials said only four people were killed in Baramullah. They also did not give details of the incident. Elsewhere in Kashmir at least seven people were killed Sunday in fighting between government forces and Muslim rebels who want to set up a separate nation in the northern state. The deaths were reported by government officials and residents from five other Kashmiri towns, including Srinagar, the state's summer capital and the centre of the separatist movement.

Baker rejects peace conference; Arab allies endorse Bush statements

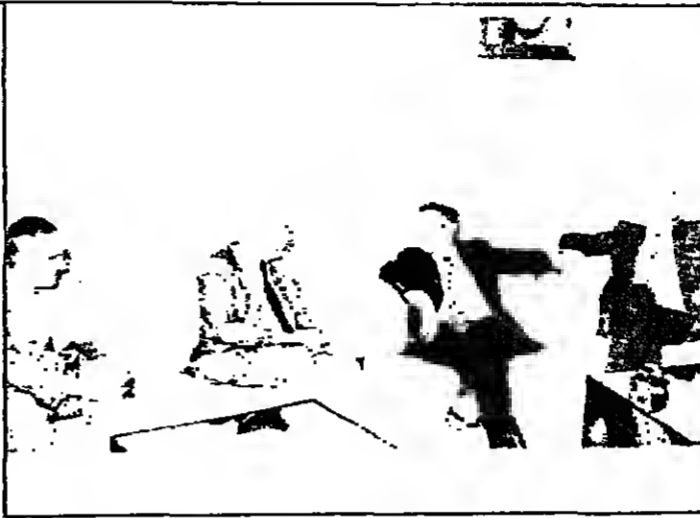
CAIRO (AP) — Eight Arab governments Sunday endorsed a proposal by U.S. President George Bush that calls on Israel to relinquish territory in exchange for peace in the region. But U.S. Secretary of State James Baker meeting with top officials of the countries in Saudi Arabia before flying here Sunday night, rejected an Arab request for a Middle East peace conference. "This is not the appropriate time," Baker said in the Saudi capital Riyadh, reiterating the U.S. stance opposing such a meeting. Baker, on his first Middle East diplomatic mission since the Gulf war, met with the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and

Qatar. He was to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Monday, and he also will visit Israel and Syria on the trip. Bush, pledging to move quickly toward a lasting peace in the Middle East, told Congress last week that any settlement should be based on an exchange of territory for peace. "We support this initiative," Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal said after meeting with Baker. "We had a very positive discussion, all of us in here." Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, agreed. "When you get these eight countries supporting U.S. policies... I think that is very, very important," he said.

Baker said he and the foreign ministers made "some very good progress," and emphasised the Arab acceptance of a proposal for a permanent security force to protect the oil fields in the Gulf from aggression. But there was a clear difference between the United States and the eight Arab nations on a Middle East peace conference. "Our objective is to convene an international conference under U.N. auspices," Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa told reporters. "There is a consensus on this." Mr. Baker said that while a conference might be useful at some point, the time is not right. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his senior advisers

British minister arrives in exploratory visit

AMMAN (Petra) — British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg arrived here Sunday on a three-day visit as part of a tour of the region. Hogg will discuss with Jordanian officials the situation in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Gulf war. The British official was received at Amman airport by the secretary general of the Foreign Ministry and the head of the ministry's political department. In an interview with Jordan Television shortly after arrival, Hogg said the purpose of his visit to Jordan was to get familiarised with "the way people are thinking in Jordan about the way forward... and to resume the very good relations that historically Great Britain has had with Jordan."



British Foreign Office Minister Douglas Hogg (second from right) arrives at Amman Sunday (Petra photo)

He expressed his belief that it is very important to implement the U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 calling on Israel to withdraw from the lands it occupied in 1967. He said there should be an agreement between Israel and the Palestinian people. On convening an international Middle East peace conference, Hogg said a conference might have a part to play. "It may be done under the auspices of the U.N. But I think an awful lot of preparatory work has got to be done for a conference to be useful," he said. "To have a conference too soon or without preparatory work will certainly invite failure," he added.

Jardaneh: Kingdom received enough aid

By Rana Sabbagh  
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan, deprived of Gulf aid because of its stand in the Gulf war, will still get more foreign aid than expected to help repair the cost of the conflict, Finance Minister Basil Jardaneh said Sunday. He said a 120 million dinar (\$180 million) crisis fund, earmarked as separate from the 1991 budget, was still intact to repair the Gulf war damage, which devastated almost every sector of the economy. Washington and its allies appealed for aid for states hit by the war, but the United States has said it is reviewing aid to Jordan because of what Washington perceived as Amman's pro-Baghdad stand. But Jardaneh told parliament that all the indications were that foreign aid inflows pledged for 1991 would be received and would also allow the government to carry out projects listed in the Gulf crisis fund. Jordan based this year's budget on assumptions it would get 594 million dinars (\$891 million) in foreign grants and loans. Jardaneh said the Kingdom expected to receive up to 891 million dinars (\$1.8 billion) in assistance this year.



Basil Jardaneh

Indicators show that foreign financing that was estimated in the 1991 budget would be totally achieved and will also allow us to carry out all projects that were listed under the (Gulf crisis) separate emergency fund," Jardaneh told parliament. He said Jordan had received 316 million dinars (\$474 million), more than half of it in grants from the 12-nation European Community, the Netherlands and Germany and the rest in easy loans, mostly from Japan. Jardaneh said Jordan had another 187 million dinars (\$280 million) in loans or grants already provided for but not fully received in addition to 387 million dinars (\$581 million) in pledged grants and aid. He said a further 30 million dinars (\$45 million) would go towards the cost of putting the armed forces on alert during the Gulf war and on building roads and schools. Jardaneh said the emergency fund allocated 28 million dinars (\$42 million) to help fund new export markets, finance industrial and agricultural projects and boost tourism. They would also be spent on widening the country's services infrastructure to enable it to absorb some 300,000 Jordanians who fled Kuwait and other Gulf states during the crisis. The crisis cost Jordan its traditional markets — Iraq because it adhered to a U.N. trade embargo against Baghdad — and the Gulf, its traditional backers, because of its position on the Gulf conflict.

On the eve of Baker's arrival, Israel insists on Shamir plan; 4 Israelis killed in knife attack

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli leaders decided Sunday to pre-empt James Baker with a two-year-old peace plan when he arrives in search of a new order in the Middle East. Palestinians argued over whether to even see the visiting U.S. secretary of state. Mr. Baker, who comes to occupied Jerusalem Monday in his first visit to Israel, has been sent by U.S. President George Bush to study prospects for peace in the long-troubled region. The secretary will be arriving in a city where the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis again burst into violence Sunday.

A knife-wielding Palestinian fatally stabbed three Jewish women and wounded a fourth in occupied Jerusalem, and Jewish settlers went on a rampage in Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank, smashing windows, firing guns in the air and beating Palestinians. On Sunday, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and government ministers held two meetings to discuss Baker's visit, and radio reports said they decided Israel's 1989 peace initiative would be the basis for discussions with Baker. While Bush pledged last week to seek a land-for-peace solution to the Israel-Arab conflict, the

Israeli plan offers Palestinians limited autonomy with Israel keeping control of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Avi Pazner, a top adviser to Shamir, would not discuss the meetings but said Israel would push its plan that offers Palestinians elections and negotiations on Israel's autonomy offer. "We have a good peace initiative of May 1989 and this is what we want to go ahead with," Pazner said. Palestinian leaders, who have criticised the plan as inadequate since its introduction, wrangled

Bush courts Iran, says stable Jordan is everybody's interest

WASHINGTON — President George Bush says it is time "to think anew" about the problems in the Middle East. During an interview on March 8 with journalists from Egypt, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Bush said the United States is implementing its own thinking by sending Secretary of State James A. Baker to the region in order to find "common ground with our coalition partners and the people of Israel and others." In the interview, the U.S. president said that a stable Jordan was in everybody's interest. He said however, that Jordanian demonstrators targeted him personally. The president also discussed

the roles for Iraq and Iran in the Gulf. He said the United States has had a very strained relationship with Iran and "we want better relations with Iran." And, if Iraq will signal they are renouncing aggression and are willing to live within their own borders, he said, it could be "an important part of the area." We do not want an unstable Iraq," he added. Bush also said the PLO "has been diminished because they bet on the wrong horse, for the wrong reasons." Following are excerpts of the president's interview: President Bush: I wanted to say a word of welcome to you all, and be glad to thank you for coming

all this way. I think the best thing is just to go ahead and start, though I might say at the beginning that the coalition that was put together to stand up against the aggression has been, in my view, historic. There were a lot of predictions early on that one or another country would pull away or that it would fracture in some way on a day when I have great gratitude in my heart to the leaders of the coalition countries — countries, some with their — well, I guess all the countries from which you've come, having had forces there — Morocco, of course, in a special role. Not a

PLO silent on meeting with Baker

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) remained silent Sunday on whether it would give leading Palestinians in the occupied Arab territories the go-ahead to meet U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The PLO leadership wrapped up a series of meetings devoted to the issue late Saturday. "Only (PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat is authorised to make statements on this matter," a PLO source said. Baker, who is touring the Middle East in search of ways to bring peace to the region following the end of the Gulf war, said Friday that he would be happy to meet Palestinian representatives if they wanted such a meeting.

Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories, scene of a 39-month uprising against Israeli rule, said in response that they were waiting for the go-ahead from the PLO. Such a meeting would be the first since last June when the Bush administration broke off 18 months of dialogue with the PLO after it refused to repudiate a seaborne raid on Israel by a Palestinian faction. Baker arrives in Israel Monday. Diplomats in Tunis said that any Palestinian delegation would most likely include some or all of the 12 personalities who met three foreign ministers from the European Community on March 7.

The 12 told the European ministers that the PLO was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people both inside and outside the occupied territories. They included Faisal Al Husseini, president of the Jerusalem Arab Studies Association, former Nablus Mayor Mustafa Natche and Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij. President George Bush, in an interview Friday, castigated the PLO for hacking Iraq during the six-week war. Bush said he was "not in any rush" to hold direct talks with the PLO on Middle East peace and Palestinian demands for a homeland, "they've (the PLO) moved

French premier reiterates support for international peace conference

NEW YORK (AP) — French Premier Michel Rocard said Sunday that he and President Bush would discuss the shaping of peace in the Gulf, along with international trade and co-operation policy and French-American relations. "We have plenty of subjects," Rocard said during a brief interview on ABC's This Week with David Brinkley. "I'm hopeful that all this can be solved in the best way, as usual," he said of his agenda with Bush. Rocard is to meet with Bush Monday before leaving Washington. Saturday, he appeared before the Organisation of American States and was to address the

Franco-American Foundation later Sunday. Rocard downplayed U.S.-French disagreement on how to achieve Middle East peace and stability, saying that the two nations "agree on the main fundamentals." "I think the French-American friendship has grown in this crisis," he said. Rocard reiterated France's support for a Middle East peace conference, but said the result — that Israel, Kuwait and Palestine all end up with legitimate states — was more important than how that is achieved. He also called for Lebanon to be "empty of foreign troops."

"Let us insist on the heart of the matter more than the procedures," he said. He said that trade talks with Bush will focus on GATT, the failed negotiation meant to standardise and open international trade. The talks fell apart in December chiefly because of disagreement between Europe and the United States on agriculture subsidies. Rocard said practical ways to tie a European defence policy with the North Atlantic alliance must now be considered. "Today's changing world offers a fresh opportunity for Franco-American relations to enter a new era."

'Republican Guards storm Karbala'

BEIRUT (R) — Iraq's elite republican guards, facing a rebellion in many cities, stormed the city of Karbala on Sunday and killed 500 rebels, a senior Iraqi opposition leader reported. Speaking to reporters on arrival in Beirut from Tehran, Ayatollah Taqi Al-Mudarresi accused President Saddam Hussein's loyalists of pursuing a scorched earth policy against rebel-held Iraqi cities. "The latest information I received while at Tehran Airport is that the Republican Guard backed by tanks stormed the city of Karbala... which was liberated five days ago," Mudarresi said. "But today (Sunday) the Guards stormed the city with tanks and according to official reports 500 martyrs fell in the city." Karbala and Najaf in central Iraq are both holy cities for Shi'ite Muslims, who form nearly

half of the country's 17 million population. Mudarresi said artillery pounded Karbala before the attack, causing extensive damage. He did not indicate if the battle was over but said other cities had been under similar attacks which he said were repulsed. "We hope that this campaign (against Karbala) will fall but the number of victims will be high... there is no evidence so far that chemical weapons were used (in the holy city)," he added. Mudarresi heads the Islamic Action Organisation (IAO), a Tehran-based Shi'ite Muslim opposition group. Mudarresi said his group had what it considered as proof that the Iraqi army command had authorised troops near Najaf to use chemical weapons against the rebels.

Despite reports of brutal treatment, Palestinians eager to return to Kuwait

AMMAN (R) — Many Palestinians who see Kuwait as their only home are desperate to return from exile in Jordan, despite warnings of revenge attacks by Kuwaitis enraged by the Palestine Liberation Organisation's support for Iraq. "I don't care if I go back there and I don't have work," said Amani Qassem, a travel agent who left Kuwait after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion. "I lived there and was born there. I love that country." "If I could I would go back tomorrow," said another Palestinian who had spent almost all her life in Kuwait. Palestinians arrive every day at the Kuwaiti embassy, draped in flags and lit with coloured lights to celebrate the end of Iraqi occupation. But the embassy says it is not even allowing its own nationals to return yet. "The Kuwaitis still have not been allowed to enter Kuwait," said ambassador to Jordan, Sulaiman Salem Al

Fassam. He said it would take at least two months for essential repairs before exiled residents could return. PLO officials have warned that their people could be massacred by Kuwaitis bent on revenge for widespread Palestinian sympathy towards the Iraqi leader. Some Palestinians who stayed in Kuwait are accused of collaborating with Iraqi occupiers. The Jordanian government has also asked Kuwait and Western members of the alliance against Iraq to protect Jordanians and Palestinians against revenge attacks. "The Palestinians have lived with us for years. All of those rumours come from the PLO, which is nonsense. They are welcome in Kuwait," Mr. Fassam said. "Kuwaitis who are there know the Palestinians who collaborated with the Iraqis. They know them by name," the Kuwaiti ambassador said. "They are not saying all the

Palestinians collaborated." Some Jordanians returning from Kuwait this week said Kuwaiti soldiers are rounding up anyone suspected of having cooperated with the Iraqi occupiers. "The question is not who cooperated with whom — we should forget about the past and begin from the beginning," said Palestinian accountant Saleh Al Khatib. "When (PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat says that Kuwaitis are killing Palestinians he does not solve any problem. He makes it worse between Kuwait and the Palestinians." "Arafat must be wise and calm things down. If there are some problems they are individual," said Mahmoud Younis, a Palestinian businessman who had spent 23 years in Kuwait. About 400,000 Palestinians lived in Kuwait before Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion. Many had spent decades there.

Over half that number left after the invasion, most returning to Jordan where they now have to depend on relatives they used to support with remittances. Khatib, who lived in Kuwait for most of his 25 years, said he believed it would take several months for anti-Palestinian feeling to subside. "I'm sure that it's not the right time to go back. My uncles are Kuwaitis but I'm afraid to go back," he said. "I'm sure that many Palestinians did cooperate with the Iraqi army and the Kuwaitis saw them — so they will not be happy if they see Palestinians. I'm sure if I was there and I was a Kuwaiti I would do the same thing." About 230,000 Palestinians fled Kuwait after the invasion, many crossing the Jordanian border with a lifetime of belongings crammed into dusty cars and only uncertainty

Iraqis rest arms, put on work gear

By P.V. Virekanand  
in Baghdad

THE demobilisation of several divisions and units, including reserves, in the Iraqi army has gone into full gear to the relief of many Iraqi families which now hope that the homecoming soldiers could go back to their regular work at farms and elsewhere in the agricultural and industrial sectors to cope with the aftereffects of the 40-day war which ended late last month. But the process is a tough one. Hundreds of Iraqi soldiers could be seen in the streets of Baghdad, toting haversacks and awaiting transportation home, sometimes to villages as far as the Turkish border. "I am glad the war is over," said Mohammad Shitwa, from a town near Mosul in the north. "Now I can go to home and look after my small sheep farm," he said. But many are not as lucky as Shitwa to have something to go back to. Many would find themselves jobless as a result of the devastation caused by

the allied bombing of key industrial sites and installations. "I don't know whether I would find the hotel I used to work for," said Hussein Kishal, also from near Mosul. "They tell me many sites in and around Mosul have been hit. I pray the hotel was not one of them." The main railway between Baghdad and Mosul and further north is accessible only to the army, at least for the duration of the demobilisation. The dismantling of army units appears to be in line with the government's goal of restoring normalcy as soon as possible and launch quick post-war reconstruction — a job easily said than done, considering the early estimates of the extent of damage that 40 days of intense bombing have done to Iraq. According to people arriving in Baghdad from the north, among those hard hit in the blitzkrieg are the phosphate production and processing facilities, oil installations and telecommunications centres, in addition to hundreds of

industrial sites. Many of the reservist soldiers have come from these facilities and find themselves with no employment to go back to. Also hit was the biggest Iraqi refinery at Beji, halfway between Mosul and Baghdad, as well as a huge oil storage facility which used to serve the entire country. "It might take some time before an accurate assessment is made of the damages," said a senior U.N. official. But, according to first reports, oil production is one of the key areas badly damaged. Hundreds of thousands of people working in this sector were called to army duty prior to the war. Not much of a production loss, however, since Iraqi oil exports had come to a halt since early August when the U.N. Security Council imposed a sweeping trade embargo on Iraq. In any event, unemployed soldiers in all parts of Iraq is a key issue that the government has to tackle with utmost

urgency. But the innovative people of Iraq are also contributing to the effort. "I was driving a taxi before I was called for duty," Ahmad said. "Now I am back but I cannot drive a car since there is not enough fuel to go around," he explained referring to the fuel rationing the authorities introduced to cope with reduced oil production as a result of the allied bombing. "Now I sell tomatoes and cucumber and try to make a living. I'll go back to driving taxis when things get back to normal, which will be quite soon, God willing," he added with a sigh. The ability of the Iraqi people to adapt is indeed in the back of the nation of 18 million people who trace their origins to 5,000 years back. In the meantime, Baghdad, the city of the thousand nights, remains dark at night in the absence of power. But, as a hotel waiter put it, "we have to live with it and with confidence that things will be back as they were before Jan. 17" — the day the war started.

## Rafsanjani calls for compromise in Iraq

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, saying Iraq could face all-out civil war, Sunday repeated a call for a deal between the Baghdad government and rebel groups.

"We are concerned that the situation in Iraq may lead to extensive rebellion and war inside Iraq," Tehran Radio quoted Rafsanjani as saying.

"It is necessary that the government and all groups inside Iraq cooperate to calm down Iraq's internal situation," the president told visiting Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiri Diensthir.

Open revolt against President Saddam Hussein has flared in dozens of towns since the Gulf war ended.

Opponents of Saddam, including Shi'ite Muslim groups based in Tehran, have reported heavy casualties in fighting between loyalist troops and rebels including dissident soldiers.

Even before the outbreak of the Gulf war two months ago, Rafsanjani said Iran believed the key to Iraq's future was "to think up a sound plan... ensuring its territorial integrity."

On Saturday, Iran's Supreme National Security Council warned foreign and regional governments against interfering in Iraq's internal affairs.

Rafsanjani, who wants peace on Iraq's borders so he can con-

centrate on rebuilding an economy ravaged by the 1980-88 war with Iraq, made his first appeal for Iraqi power-sharing in a Friday prayer sermon.

He urged the Iraqi leadership to submit to the will of the people, saying suppression of the rebellion would be its "biggest and last mistake."

He also advised the Iraqi opposition to consider cooperation with the ruling Baath Party to save the country from further ruin.

Rafsanjani firmly denied Iranian involvement in the unrest, saying Tehran was just expressing sympathy for the Iraqi people, more than half of whom are Shi'ites, like the majority of Iraqis.

But an official of the Tehran-based Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), a mainly Shi'ite dissident group, has said cooperation with the Baath Party is impossible.

The Iranian News Agency IRNA said 10,000 Iraqis fleeing the fighting in southern Iraq had crossed into Iran. A similar number of non-Iraqis fleeing allied attacks entered Iran during the Gulf war.

Tehran Radio said Rafsanjani told Diensthir that foreign forces should leave the Gulf region for the sake of peace.

"If the Iraqi issue is solved we will have no other important problem in the region," he said.

## Ozal to discuss Gulf in Soviet Union

ANKARA (R) — President Turgut Ozal will discuss the Gulf situation and economic ties during a visit to the Soviet Union this week, the first by a Turkish head of state since 1969.

Ozal, due in the United States later this month, will meet Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow Monday.

"The new structure of the Middle East will definitely be high on the agenda of the two leaders," the Turkish ambassador in Moscow, Volkan Vural, told Cumhuriyet newspaper.

He said Ozal's visit would pave the way for Turkey and the Soviet Union to play active parts in rehabilitating the Gulf.

During the Gulf crisis, NATO-member Turkey and the Soviet Union backed all U.N. Secretary General resolutions against Iraq.

But while Moscow sought a diplomatic solution until the last moment, Ozal made clear he favoured the removal of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and gave U.S. bombers use of a Turkish base.

Ozal will be U.S. President George Bush's guest at Camp David on March 22 and 23. A White House spokesman said they would review "outstanding progress" in U.S.-Turkish relations and discuss Gulf and other international issues.

Ozal last went to Moscow as Prime Minister in 1986. Natural gas imports from the Soviet Union began flowing to Turkey the following year, laying the basis for expanded economic ties.

This time he plans trips to the Soviet republics of Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan to boost cultural and economic links.

Turkish Airlines plans to start scheduled flights to Baku, capital of the Turkish-speaking Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan.

Presidential spokesman Kaya Toperi said nearly 100 officials and businessmen, mainly contractors, would accompany Ozal on his six-day visit.

Ozal is likely to raise a proposal he made last year for a four-nation Black Sea economic coop-



Turgut Ozal

eration region to promote free trade and movement of goods and services.

Turkey, Bulgaria, the Soviet Union and Romania explored the idea at talks in December in Ankara. Bucharest will host a technical meeting on March 12 to 13.

Turkey is seeking new export markets in former Eastern Bloc

countries to narrow a trade deficit which widened last year mainly because of the Gulf crisis.

The Soviet ambassador to Turkey, Albert Chernishev, told reporters last week several agreements would be signed during Ozal's visit, including one to prevent double taxation and another on the technical and economic cooperation.

Two-way trade was worth \$1.78 billion in 1990, up from \$1.3 billion in 1989. Turkey exports industrial goods and food to the Soviet Union and buys natural gas and machinery.

Turkey expects trade volume to reach at least \$2 billion this year. It bought four billion cubic metres of Soviet gas in 1990 under a deal for purchases of up to six billion.

Since 1989, Turkish Eximbank has provided loans totalling \$950 million to Moscow to finance Soviet imports from Turkey and work done by Turkish contractors who are executing 17 projects in the Soviet Union worth nearly \$600 million.

## Syrian drug raid aimed at better ties with Washington — diplomats

DAMASCUS (AP) — Syria claims to have mounted its biggest drug raid ever in Lebanonese areas it controls, an apparent attempt to placate Washington in advance of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's visit, Western diplomats have said.

Syrian Interior Minister Mohammad Harba said Saturday that Syrian troops confiscated 80 tonnes of hashish in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley in the past few days.

Harba said that in addition to the hashish, 14 kilograms (30 pounds) of opium, 12 kilograms (26 pounds) of cocaine and 4 bottles of a chemical used in processing illicit drugs were also seized in several towns and villages in east Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, where about 25,000 Syrian troops are stationed.

He estimated the value of the

narcotics at \$300 to \$100 million. The State Department has claimed that Syrian military officers profit from the illicit drug trade and profit from it.

Western diplomats, speaking in exchange for anonymity, said the drug bust was a show staged to impress Baker.

They said the Syrians want to get rid of as many areas of friction between Washington and Damascus as possible before any new U.S. initiative toward a Mideast peace settlement gets underway.

But Harba insisted that the raids "came in line with Syria's campaign to combat crime and that it was not political."

Harba told a press conference that Lebanese authorities had asked the Syrians to bring the drugs to Syria to be destroyed. He refused to say how many drug traffickers were arrested or

if they would be prosecuted according to Lebanese or Syrian law.

Harba also declined to say why his government has waited until now to carry out its biggest bust ever in the Bekaa Valley, which it has controlled for 15 years.

Syria has some 40,000 troops deployed in Lebanon and is the main power broker there.

The Bekaa Valley is one of the world's primary sources of hashish. Since 1975, when Lebanon's civil war broke out, the number of drug busts there have been few and far in between.

Harba said the last raids took place in 1987.

A visitor to the Bekaa Valley now would be able to see the openly-cultivated opium plants in bloom, their white, purple or pink flowers ranging up to the roadside.

Reportedly one of the world's primary sources of hashish, Lebanon produces an estimated 600 to 700 tonnes a year.

Since 1989, Lebanon has also emerged as a major source of heroin. There are reportedly up to 10 heroin-processing plants in Lebanon to refine the drug from raw opium.

Harba confirmed that in 1989, Syria was approached by the U.S. State Department for cooperation in drug control.

A spokesman at the American embassy here said that the "U.S. is in consultation with Syria on the issue."

Asked whether any of Lebanon's militias were involved in the trafficking, Harba said, "one cannot accuse one militia or the other. There are drug traffickers who belong to militias and others who operate independently."

## With freedom party over, Kuwaitis face troubled future

By Rodney Pinder  
Reuters

KUWAIT — Like the morning after the night before, Kuwaitis are waking up from their long liberation celebrations to the harsh realities of rebuilding a country, physically, psychologically and politically.

The reconstruction bill from a seven-month Iraqi occupation and the Gulf war could be as much as \$200 billion, an enormous amount for a country of only two million, even one as rich as pre-war Kuwait.

The oil industry that made Kuwait per capita the world's wealthiest nation could take five years to fully restore. It could be 45 to 60 days before enough oil is produced to supply domestic needs and nine months before the first exports.

The psychological scars of a brutal occupation may take time to heal.

Kuwaitis say several thousands people were killed by the occupiers but a true count must await investigation by impartial authorities.

Little evidence has emerged publicly in the past week or so to indicate more than several hundred killed.

Whatever the final body count, there is plenty of evidence that the occupation regime was cruel and rapacious.

Normally urbane businessmen and scholars spit the name of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his sympathisers. Many do not hesitate to say they think more kindly of the Arab World's nemesis, Israel, than they do of some of their Arab brethren.

Domestically, the war has reawakened desires for a wider democracy in this tiny emirate, ruled by one family for almost 250 years.

There is promise of real change in that regard but officials say more fundamental problems first need to be solved.

The capital of 300,000 has no running water, electricity, sewerage, telephones or reliable food

supplies. Retreating Iraqis destroyed power and water plants, pipes and power lines.

Roads and bridges are pockmarked with bomb craters and littered with remnants of the Iraqi army. Government buildings, shops and hotels have been looted and burned.

"For a country to come back to life you need light, you need water," said Abdul Rahman Al Awadi, minister of state for cabinet affairs. "Everything is a mess. Life is really chaos."

For 10 days since Kuwait was liberated by U.S.-led multinational forces, the country ignored its plight and parties. Every day there was a new parade of hoisting vehicles punctuated by celebratory gunfire along the corniche.

But the parades and the joyous flag-waving have died away. On Saturday the corniche featured a march by 200 disgruntled wives and children of Kuwaitis taken hostage by Iraq.

The black-clad women said they knew of at least 22,000 prisoners in Iraq compared with

estimate of 6,000 from the prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah.

A day earlier, some 1,200 Kuwaitis by Iraq freed on the northern border voiced similar complaints of apparent government indifference when there were no officials to meet them.

Kuwaitis are muttering that a government clean-up is slow. But few ordinary Kuwaitis have yet been seen clearing pavements or boarding up smashed windows.

Asked why, one puzzled businessman told a reporter: "There are international cleaning companies who do this sort of thing."

Planning Minister Sulaiman Mutawa said a new currency — the Kuwaiti dinar was replaced by the virtually worthless Iraqi dinar — a new democracy and above all a new spirit of self-reliance were essential for national recovery.

He said there could be no going back to Kuwait's "fat and flabby" reliance on foreign labour and the state, and that reconstruction would go hand-in-hand with a resumption of parliamentary

## Japan calls off mission to Gulf

TOKYO (R) — Japan's ruling party abruptly called off plans to send a high-level mission to the Gulf this weekend because of poor planning, a party official said Sunday.

The delegation, led by the party's Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa, had been scheduled to leave Saturday for a five-day tour of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and Syria to discuss Japanese postwar aid.

But on departure day, party officials realised that preparations for local transportation and meetings with regional leaders were inadequate.

"We had trouble fixing a schedule of meetings and arranging flights in the region so Ozawa decided to call off the trip," said a ruling Liberal Democratic Party official.

He added the trip could be

rescheduled at a later date. Although the official would give no details, local news reports said that Ozawa had originally planned to arrange meetings with leaders after arriving in the Gulf.

Adding to the difficulties, Ozawa had been unable to arrange flights in and out of war-ravaged Kuwait.

The fact that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was touring the Gulf also caused Ozawa to reconsider the trip, the reports said.

Ozawa's mission had been expected to draw up a report for the government, currently debating what type of aid to offer Middle East and Asian countries affected by the Gulf crisis.

No official figure has been stated but ruling party leaders have said it would be around \$10 billion.

## Meningitis outbreaks in southern Sudan

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Rebels in southern Sudan are appealing to the international community for vaccines to combat an outbreak of meningitis they say is spreading very fast northward.

A statement by the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA) said the disease had already killed at least 20 people in Yigol and Rumbek, small towns south of the provincial capital of Juba, that are controlled by the rebels.

SRRA's office in Nairobi issued the statement Saturday.

"The situation is reported to be worsening and the disease is spreading very fast to other areas to the north," the statement said.

The association is the relief arm of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which has been fighting since 1983 for increased autonomy for the predominantly Christian and animist south.

Sudan's government is traditionally dominated by the Muslim north.

The rebels control most of the small towns and the countryside

in southern Sudan.

The statement said the association's medical coordinator, Dr. Akol Marial, had organised an emergency team to rush to Yigol 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of vaccines available at Kapoeta near Kenya's border. But the team lacked transport.

Sudan's government halted all relief flights to southern Sudan on Feb. 15.

The statement said Marial "has appealed to the international community to intervene to avert the impending disaster."

A viral disease, meningitis attacks the brain and the spinal cord and is fatal if not treated early.

In March 1989, a meningitis epidemic in Ethiopia spread into neighbouring Sudan killing as many as 400 people, according to Western health officials.

The Sudanese government said 2,548 people were stricken and that only 102 died.

Western health officials say meningitis makes a westward pass, across northern Africa every year during the hot weather that precedes the rainy season.

### MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Libya says W.W. II mine maims 3 children

NICOSIA (R) — A World War II mine explosion has maimed three children who are in serious condition in a Benghazi hospital, the Libyan News Agency JANA said Sunday. The agency, received in Cyprus, said the incident took place south of the eastern Libyan city of Suluq Friday. "The three children... underwent several serious operations and were maimed as a result of their injuries," it added. Libya had repeatedly sought maps of minefields on its territory "that have caused a lot of human losses and prevented land cultivation," and demanded reparations for those who suffered from the mines, JANA said.

#### Bahrain, Romania establish diplomatic ties

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) — Bahrain and Romania on Sunday decided to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries. A foreign ministry statement distributed by the official Gulf news agency said the two countries will have relations at ambassador level with immediate effect. Romania is the third eastern European country after the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia to have diplomatic ties with the central Gulf island state. The conservative state, like neighbouring Saudi Arabia and Qatar, dropped traditional reluctance to have relations with eastern European states after the Gulf crisis, when the Soviet Union and its neighbours took a stand against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

#### Quake jolts Iran's main oil-producing province

NICOSIA (R) — An earthquake registering 5.2 on the Richter scale jolted Iran's main oil-producing province of Khuzestan early on Sunday but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, the Iranian news agency IRNA said. The geophysics centre of Tehran University said the quake struck at 12.54 a.m. (2114 GMT on Saturday) and was centred near the town of Izeb about 500 kilometres southwest of the Iranian capital, IRNA reported. An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the open-ended Richter scale is powerful enough to cause heavy damage in a populated area.

#### Gulf protest soldier gives himself up

LONDON (R) — A British soldier who went missing because he was opposed to Britain's role in the Gulf crisis and later addressed a peace rally has given himself up, the defence ministry said Sunday. Lance Corporal Vic Williams, 28, disappeared from his base in Germany late last year, on the day he was due to be sent on Gulf service to Saudi Arabia. He reappeared last month at a peace rally in London, where he gave a speech denouncing the Gulf war, before fleeing and vanishing into the crowd. A defence ministry spokeswoman said Williams gave himself up on Saturday at military police headquarters in London. The question of disciplinary action against him was "a matter between himself and his commanding officer," she said.

#### National conference on Somalia postponed

NAIROBI, (R) — national conference on the future of Somalia, which had been called for March 14, has been postponed to allow more time for consultation, Mogadishu Radio reported on Saturday. The radio, monitored in Nairobi, said consultations were still going on among the rebel groups which toppled the government of President Mohammad Siad Barre in January. Another factor was that the Muslim holy month of Ramadan was approaching. In addition, some suggestions had been put forward by intellectuals, clerics and the reconciliation committee set up by the new Somali government. The radio said a new date would be announced for the national conference after agreement had been reached between the different rebel fronts.

## No shortcut to normalcy for citizens of Baghdad

By Maamoun Yousef  
Reuters

BAGHDAD — Ten days after the bombing stopped, the citizens of Baghdad are discovering there will be no quick return to a normal life.

Most of the city is without electricity, water flows only in a trickle, essential foods are scarce, garbage is uncollected and petrol sells on the black market at 100 times its normal price.

Power supplies were wiped out

on the first night of relentless allied aerial bombardment on Jan. 17 and the greater part of Baghdad still lives in darkness.

The government and many ordinary Iraqis accused the U.S.-led alliance of trying to smash the country's infrastructure on the pretext of liberating Kuwait.

Within days of the Feb. 28 Gulf war ceasefire, hopes were raised of an early to normalcy when lights flickered on in a small area of the capital.

But on Sunday, the director-

general of electricity distribution in Baghdad, Laith Al Sbeikhi, told reporters: "the main power generating centres were damaged and we need some time to repair them."

He said power supplies would begin returning in a few days but would not be sufficient to operate air conditioners, deep freezers or other heavy electrical appliances.

An engineer had previously told Reuters that Iraq would need a year before electrical supplies were fully restored.

Water supplies, crippled by bomb damage to pumping stations, are starting to return in some parts of the capital but the pressure is not strong enough to reach tanks sited on rooftops.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has sent water purification equipment to Baghdad in an attempt to prevent outbreaks of disease. More machinery was despatched by the Red Cross from Jordan on Sunday.

Baghdad's bazaars are crowded with shoppers, but basic foods, rationed after the imposition of a United Nations trade embargo on Iraq last August, remain in short supply.

The trade ministry, hoping that sanctions will soon be lifted, has increased allocations of sugar, powdered baby milk and soap by 25 per cent. But rice, flour, tea and cooking oil are still below normal requirements.

With most people concerned only with obtaining basic food supplies, many shops selling

other goods are still closed.

The government banned petrol sales to non-military consumers more than a month ago but there are still many civilian cars on the streets.

The government's price for a litre of petrol is 90 fils (about 30 U.S. cents at the official rate), but it is selling at 10 dinars (\$32) on the black market — more than 100 times the official rate.

Liquefied natural gas is also very scarce, forcing families to prepare meals on kerosene stoves

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

### PRAYER TIMES

8:41 ..... Fajr  
05:40 ..... (Sunrise) Dhuha  
11:46 ..... Dhuhr  
15:57 ..... 'Asr  
17:44 ..... Maghreb  
14:09 ..... 'Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh  
Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.  
632785.  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.  
Church of the Annunciation Tel.  
637440.  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terzani Church Tel. 622366  
Church of the Annunciation Tel.  
623541.  
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel.

628543.  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.  
717331.  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.  
77261.  
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751.  
Assiuta International Church Tel.  
685326.  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.  
811265.  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-  
Day Saints Tel. 813817, 654932.

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of  
Meteorology.  
It will be partly cloudy and slight  
drop in temperature will take place.  
Winds will be southeasterly light to  
moderate. In Agaba, it will be dusty  
with northerly moderate wind and  
calm seas.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE

Min./max. temp.  
9 / 18  
Agaba ..... 14 / 26  
Deserts ..... 7 / 20  
Jordan Valley ..... 13 / 23

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman  
19, Agaba 27. Humidity readings:  
Amman 50 per cent, Agaba 20 per  
cent.

### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:  
Dr. Taysser Saadi ..... 777636  
Dr. Munzer Al Quraini ..... 716258  
Dr. Hisham Abu Arqoub ..... 893122  
Dr. Hanna Mansoor ..... 748364

Firas pharmacy ..... 661912  
Fondos pharmacy ..... 778336  
Al Asara pharmacy ..... 637055  
Nairookh pharmacy ..... 626672  
Al Salam pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy ..... 644945  
Shmeisani pharmacy ..... 637660

IRBID:  
Dr. Ahmad Bishawi ..... (—)  
Al Sharaa pharmacy ..... 273825

### EMERGENCIES

ZARQA:  
Dr. Yahya Al Tarifi ..... (—)  
Khalaf pharmacy ..... 983417  
Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111

Civil Defence Immediate  
Rescue ..... 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Rescue Police ..... 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade ..... 891228  
Blood Bank ..... 771211  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Department ..... 63021  
Hotel Complaints ..... 605800  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Water and Sewerage  
Complaints ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality  
Complaints ..... 787111  
Telephone Information  
(directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone  
Repairs ..... 623101  
Abdali Telephone Repairs ..... 661101

Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 812615  
Electric Power  
Company ..... 636381  
RJ Flight Information ..... 08-53200  
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ..... 08-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussein Medical Centre ..... 813813/32  
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn ..... 642816  
Al-Jah Maternity, J. Amn ..... 643412  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Mathas, J. Amman ..... 636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 664171/4  
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 845845

Al-Musaher Hospital ..... 667227/9  
The Islamic, Abdali ..... 666127/37  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 664164/6  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 777101/3  
Al-Bashir, J. Amn ..... 775111/26  
Army, Marfa ..... 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 6224050  
Aqaba Hospital ..... 674135

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)883323  
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)891071  
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)886732

### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.  
Banana ..... 300 / 450

Bonam (Mukhammar) ..... 450 / 400  
Beans ..... 750 / 650  
Cabbage ..... 100 / 60  
Carrot ..... 180 / 120  
Cauliflower ..... 200 / 150  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 300 / 150  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 400 / 150  
Dates

## RJ announces Gulf flights schedule

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national air carrier, Sunday announced a new, revised schedule for its flights to and from the Gulf countries following the return of all the national airline's planes from Europe with the end of the Gulf hostilities.

An announcement from the RJ head office here said that RJ aircraft would make two weekly flights to Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Doha, in Qatar, four flights to Dubai in the UAE, and one flight weekly to Muscat, in Oman, as of Tuesday, March 12.

The statement said that the new schedule was part of RJ's drive to restore full operational activities to Arab and foreign countries.

"At present only 50 per cent of RJ's total capacity will be put into action until the end of March when RJ offices will start implementing the winter scheduled programmes until June, time to switch to summer schedules," the statement pointed out.

It said that RJ would soon announce its flights to Jeddah,

Riyadh and Dhahran in Saudi Arabia as well as to other destinations in the Gulf countries.

RJ announced the return of its aircraft from Vienna on March 3 and said that this was prompted by the cancellation of the war-risk insurance premiums that made the operations costly.

During war time, passengers had to pay JD 100 on regional flights and JD 167 on international flights as surcharge insurance premium in addition to ticket prices.

Extra charges on goods transported by RJ planes have also been removed.

Before the Gulf war, RJ used to operate daily flights to the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, but it had to gradually curtail its flights and to stop them altogether later in the light of the hostilities in the region, before resuming limited number of flights on Feb. 21.

RJ President and Chief Executive Officer Husam Abu Ghazaleh said that the national airline was doing all in its power to offer the best services to passengers and to maintain Jordan's links with the outside world under all circumstances.



PRINCE HASSAN MEETS SUDANESE MINISTER: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday reviewed with the visiting Sudanese Interior Minister and member of the Sudanese Revolutionary Command Council Maj.-Gen. Faisal Abu Saleh bilateral relations and means of developing them. Maj.-Gen. Abu Saleh conveyed the

greetings of the Sudanese head of state Gen. Omar Hassan Al Bashir to His Majesty King Hussein and voiced appreciation of Jordan's services offered to Sudan through the Hashemite Jordanian Charity Projects. Maj.-Gen. Abu Saleh extended an invitation to Prince Hassan to visit Sudan.

## Head of ICRC delegation briefs Badran on aid programmes for Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran Sunday received in his office Werner Kaspar, head of the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Amman, and discussed with him humanitarian services to Iraq.

Mr. Kaspar briefed the prime minister on the programme of food and medicine shipments to Iraq and the delivery of water purification equipment to help the Iraqis drink potable water.

The prime minister told the ICRC official that the Jordanian government would do all it can to facilitate the shipments and help ICRC offer the greatest possible help to the Iraqi people and alleviate their sufferings in the aftermath of the war.

In a statement to the Jordan Times last week Mr. Kaspar said that relief was being given to medical and hospital equipment as well as water sanitation in assistance extended by ICRC to Iraq. He said that ICRC planned to send at least two convoys every week across the border from Jordan to carry the supplies to Iraq.

ICRC has been sending convoys of trucks carrying medicine, diesel generators and fuel as well as spare parts for water sanitation equipment and food.

"The most important thing to do is to get the hospitals operating again; and for this we need power generators," said Mr. Kaspar.

Equally important, he said, is the drinking water. The ICRC was giving priority to these areas before turning to food supplies, according to ICRC, whose teams paid visits to Iraq to investigate the people's needs.

Shortage of medicine and contaminated water were two major problems which had raised fears to epidemics, particularly in Baghdad, a city with a pre-war population to four million.

Relief officials said shortages had forced Iraqi hospitals to halve the amount of food served to thousands of Gulf war patients.

Mr. Kaspar said he feared an outbreak of epidemics caused by allied bomb damage to Iraq's sewage and water facilities.

"The ICRC continues to be very concerned about the health situation, the sanitary conditions and a growing lack of food among the most vulnerable groups in Iraq," Mr. Kaspar was quoted to say by Reuters.

"With rising temperatures, the danger for many diseases increases dramatically and the ICRC is now fighting against time to try to prevent another health catastrophe," he said.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has warned that typhoid, cholera and meningitis outbreaks could kill tens of thousands of Iraqis once the weather warms by the end of March.

Mr. Kaspar said relief convoys sent Sunday to Iraq was carrying, besides food, medicine and water treatment machinery, 17 aid workers, including a "tracking specialist," who would try to help families separated by the seven-month-old Gulf crisis and look for people missing in Iraq and Kuwait.

Allied bombing cut off telecommunication lines in Iraq and Kuwait, making it impossible for

separated families to trace each other.

A report by a UNICEF-World Health Organisation team which travelled to Iraq recently said water supplies in Baghdad had been cut to less than five per cent and there were no functioning water treatment or sewage plants.

Some Baghdad residents were drinking water straight from the polluted Tigris River.

Mr. Kaspar said the water treatment which left Amman Sunday would purify 30,000 litres a day of water for Baghdad hospitals.

A similar machine capable of purifying 80,000 litres a day for civilian needs would reach Baghdad soon, he said.

Sunday's convoy, the second sent by the ICRC in a week from Amman, including medicines donated by the Moroccan Red Crescent.

Mr. Kaspar said distribution of the food and medical supplies would be monitored by the ICRC in line with an agreement reached with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society last month.

The prime minister Sunday also conferred with the Iranian Charge d'Affaires in Amman Nars Ghian. The two sides discussed Jordanian-Iranian relations and means of promoting cooperation.

Ghian arrived here last month to serve as charge d'affaires and pave the way for the arrival of an Iranian ambassador to Jordan.

A senior Jordanian official went to Tehran at the same time, on a similar mission and to open the Jordanian embassy, closed since the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war.

## Government briefs House on agricultural policy, budget

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday held a meeting under the Chairmanship of the House's Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Cabinet ministers.

The House listened to the government's replies to a number of proposals made by some deputies on several issues of interest to citizens. The proposals dealt with establishing health centres in a number of areas on the outskirts of Amman, holding election for all municipal councils and striking a balance between the salaries paid to old timer retired servicemen and those retired recently, as well as adjustment of government salaries to cope with the increasing cost of living.

The House also listened to a briefing by Agriculture Minister Mohammad Al Alawneh on the agricultural policy in Jordan. Mr. Alawneh said that the agricultural sector constituted a main source of income for 20 per cent of Jordan's population, and provided job opportunities for 12 per cent of the total labour force, let alone its importance in achieving food security.

Mr. Alawneh pointed out that 6,842 square kilometres of Jordan's total area of 89,206 is Ar-

able land, that is 7.6 per cent of the total area of the country.

The minister said that the ministry had used ground water to irrigate arable land, and had encouraged the growing of cereals, particularly barley, in areas where rainfall ranges between 150 cubic centimetres and 200 cubic centimetres a year.

He added that most of the land used for agriculture lies in dry areas, where the average rainfall is less than 350 cubic centimetres.

Speaking about the general objectives of the agricultural development plan Mr. Alawneh said the plan sought to achieve food security by meeting local demand, improving farmers' income and sharing the benefits of development.

On the strategy proposed for agricultural development Mr. Alawneh said it is based on making use of all arable land, stopping the trend of expanding construction at the expense of agricultural land, halting the expansion of municipalities and village council boundaries until the year 2000 and enacting a new law, defining the use of land and creating incentives and pricing policies to encourage local production.

Finance Minister Basel Jar-daneh then read out the government's statement about the volume of aid and loans the government has received and scopes of disbursing them.

In his statement Mr. Jar-daneh said the government had prepared the 1991 budget based on total external finance, estimated at JD 594 million, including JD 150 million in the form of aid and grants to the ordinary budget, JD 324.15 million in the form of external loans and JD 120 million in the form of grants and aid to finance the emergency budget.

These amounts represent only 43.5 per cent of the total estimated government expenditure of JD 1,364.41 million for the year 1991.

Mr. Jar-daneh noted that the ministry took into consideration, when preparing the 1991 budget law, the fact that Jordan would get JD 316.7 m in soft loans and grants from the European Community, the German, Dutch, Japanese, Canadian, French, Korean and Italian governments as well as the World Bank.

Mr. Jar-daneh said that an amount of JD 387 million has either been pledged or is being discussed with German, Italian and Japanese parties.

## U.N. delegation to assess destruction, needs of Iraq

By Mariam M. Shabin  
with Agency Dispatches from Baghdad

AMMAN — A 21-member United Nations delegation headed by Martti Ahtisaari, secretary general of administrative affairs and personal envoy of U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar met with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan early Sunday to be briefed by the Crown Prince on Jordan's willingness to assist the U.N. in alleviating the hardships presently faced by the people in Iraq and Kuwait.

In a scheduled meeting with the Crown Prince, Ahtisaari, whose fact finding delegation headed for Iraq later in the day, was told that Jordan was very concerned and ready to cooperate in all humanitarian efforts to alleviate the human suffering of the people in Iraq and Kuwait.

In his talks with Ahtisaari, the Crown Prince stressed that any environmental damage that resulted from the 42-day war must be addressed by appropriate U.N. agencies.

Upon their arrival in Iraq, Ahtisaari and his delegation, which brought more than 20 tonnes of relief supplies with them to Iraq, said that they would hold talks with Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials to begin a rehabilitation

survey immediately.

The 21-man U.N. delegation is the first U.N. delegation to assess the destruction of Iraq since hostilities formally ended on Feb. 28.

The supplies taken by the delegation include water purification equipment, spare parts for pumping stations, vaccines, medicines and baby food. The supplies, some of which were previously banned from entering Iraq, were authorised by a Security Council Sanctions Committee decision last Thursday which exempted humanitarian aid from the economic sanctions still in effect against Iraq.

U.N. officials in Baghdad were quoted as saying that \$1 million had already been allocated towards conducting surveys in the Iraqi capital. The U.N. study, expected to be published in May, will concentrate on the re-establishment of basic human needs, the rehabilitation of institutional infrastructure, economic management and environmental recovery.

Although the Iraqi government has already initiated a recovery effort, in Baghdad in particular, to provide the population with such basic needs as electricity and water, the government lacks equipment and material because of the U.N. imposed embargo.

Although the Iraqi government accepted the March 3 U.N. Security Council resolution aimed at paving the way for a permanent ceasefire, the U.N. endorsed economic embargo has not been lifted.

Humanitarian organisations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent as well as several U.N. agencies have sent medicine and food to Iraq.

Sunday four doctors from the medical relief organisation Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) met Iraqi health officials and visited hospitals and clinics to assess medical needs, Reuters reported.

The Paris-based MSF said that they had large quantities of medicines waiting in Europe to be shipped as soon as the exact needs of the Iraqis were known.

As part of a response to a UNICEF and WHO report published earlier this week, which said that the water supplies in the Iraqi capital were down to five per cent of the pre-war norm, the ICRC and the Jordanian Red Crescent sent convoys of medical supplies, food and water purification equipment Sunday.

The Jordanian Red Crescent, accompanied by a three-member delegation of the Gulf Peace Team, sent at least 10 tonnes of medicines to Iraq.

## HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

### King congratulates Portuguese president

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a cable to Portuguese President Mario Soares to congratulate him on being reelected president for the second term. King Hussein said many others, besides the Portuguese people, are confident in the leadership of President Soares. His Majesty expressed hope that cooperation and friendly relations between Portugal and Jordan would be enhanced.

### King condoles Touqan family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday delegated the Royal Court secretary general to convey his condolences to Touqan family over the death of the late Ghalib Suleiman Touqan. His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein also delegated the director of his office to convey his condolences to Touqan family.

### Arabiyat meets French, Turkish envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat received in his office Sunday the French ambassador to Jordan and discussed with him bilateral relations and the latest developments in the region. Arabiyat also received the Turkish ambassador in Amman and discussed with him the results of the Jordanian parliamentary delegation's visit to Turkey and the parliamentary relations between the two countries.

### House's Legal Committee meets

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament's Legal Committee held a meeting Sunday under the chairmanship of Deputy Hussein Mjalli. The committee recommended that the House approve an amendment to the Engineers Association temporary Law No. 39, 1988, as it was referred to by the government after amending one article. The House's Legal Committee also met Sunday under the chairmanship of Deputy Abdullah Ensour. The committee recommended that the House refer the pension fund law to the government and approve an amended banks law.

### Jordan, Turkey discuss ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi received in his office Sunday the Turkish ambassador to Jordan and reviewed with him relations between Jordan and Turkey. The ambassador delivered an invitation for the House to send one of its members to represent it in Turkey's celebrations of the Turkish National Assembly's establishment anniversary which will take place in April.

### MECC sends relief aid to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Sunday sent a third consignment of relief supplies to Iraq. The consignment is made up of 36 tonnes of medicine donated by the Danish Churches Relief Committee, and 81,000 litres of drinking water. The convoy is led by a number of church officials from both Jordan and Iraq. MECC Secretary General Gabriel Habib had earlier visited Jordan where he chaired several meetings attended by members of relief committees at the Jordanian churches. The meetings were aimed at assessing the needs of Jordanians who had arrived from Kuwait following the eruption of the Gulf crisis.

### Ramadan office hours announced

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Mudar Badran has issued a communique fixing office hours during the fasting month of Ramadan, from 9:30 to 2:00 p.m. The communique excluded from the programme departments whose nature of work require special administrative arrangements. Their hours will be worked out by the department directors.

### 14 schools inaugurated in Zarqa

AMMAN (Petra) — Zarqa Education Department Saturday inaugurated 14 new school buildings costing JD 7 million. The new schools can accommodate 1,000 students. The Ministry of Education owns 208 school buildings in Zarqa Governorate, but it is still running 52 school buildings in the various areas of the governorate.

### Local company offered building tender

AMMAN (Petra) — The Urban Development Department Board of Directors Sunday offered a tender for the construction of roads, passages, water and sewerage networks, and building boundary walls in Hamalan quarter, in the eastern outskirts of Amman, to a local company. The contract also includes the establishment of a vocational training centre for women, and carrying out the necessary works for the installation of electricity and telephone lines.

### Bazaar to benefit Zarqa's needy

ZARQA (Petra) — A charity bazaar was opened Sunday at Nusseib Islamic Cultural Centre in Zarqa. The three-day bazaar offers to the public clothes, ornaments, ceramics, artificial flowers, Islamic books, religious cassettes and children's books. The proceeds of the bazaar, which was opened by Zarqa Deputy Governor Khalaf Al Mahasneh, will benefit needy families in Zarqa Governorate.

## UNICEF sends \$1m worth of supplies to Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three cargo planes chartered for United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) by Royal Jordanian and carrying 89 tonnes of medical and other emergency supplies valued at \$1 million and destined for Iraq, started landing at Queen Alia International Airport Sunday. The supplies will be off loaded immediately onto 10 trucks standing by the airport to haul supplies directly to UNICEF Baghdad, for joint distribution with the Iraqi government.

The shipments, donated by UNICEF and World Health Organisation (WHO), include essential drugs, medical kits and equipment, vaccines, cold chain equipment including refrigerators, and generators, as well as collapsible water tanks, water purification chemicals, and water testing kits.

The items in the shipment, already cleared by the U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee, had been recommended by the UNICEF/WHO mission which a fortnight ago paid a week-long visit to Iraq to ascertain the medical and hygiene needs of Iraqi women, children and the aged, and to assess the health situation of Iraqi civilians in general. The same joint UNICEF/WHO team had also led a 12-truck convoy carrying 54 tonnes of medicine and medical supplies to Iraq.

At the end of its mission, the WHO-UNICEF team submitted a report on its findings to the U.N. secretary general, highlighting the immediate medical and health needs of the Iraqi civilian population. The report suggested prompt action to support repairs to the damaged water and sanitation networks before temperatures rise in Iraq.

## Amnesty International reports on Israeli injustice against surgeon

LONDON — The human rights organisation Amnesty International is drawing world public attention to a new injustice committed by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip, focusing this time on the plight of Dr. Mamdouh Al Aker, 47, from Nablus in the West Bank.

In its latest press release on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, Amnesty International said that there was concern for the Palestinian surgeon known for promoting a peaceful solution to the Palestine-Israeli conflict.

Dr. Aker has been detained and may be a prisoner of conscience, according to the statement. The statement said that Dr. Aker was arrested on Feb. 27 in Ramallah and is now believed to be held in a detention facility in the town. No formal charges appear to have been issued and he has been denied access to lawyers, said the statement.

In its statement Amnesty Inter-

national said:

Israeli media have quoted official Israeli sources as saying he was being interrogated in relation to disturbances, the issuing of leaflets hostile to the authorities and contacts with illegal organisations.

Dr. Aker is known for having publicly promoted dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis aiming at a peaceful solution to their conflict. He has contributed such views in newspaper articles and meetings. He has also been active with the Association of Israeli-Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights. Set up in March 1988 to focus on the medical aspects of human rights violations in the occupied territories, and with the Palestinian Center for the Study on Non-Violence, founded in January 1988 to promote non-violent ways to conflict resolution.

Amnesty International teleaxed the Israeli authorities on March 5, requesting information on the exact reasons for Dr. Aker's de-

tention and his current legal status. The organisation fears he may have been detained solely for his non-violent political opinions and activities, as well as for his human rights activities.

"He should be released immediately and unconditionally if that is the case," Amnesty International said.

The organisation said if there was evidence suggesting Dr. Aker had been involved in violence, this should be produced and he should be given an adequate opportunity to challenge his detention, including by having prompt access to lawyers.

In recent months several Palestinian figures known for their public promotion of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict have been arrested. They include Dr. Ahmad Al Yazji, another physician active with the Association of Israeli-Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights, who was given a one-year administrative detention order in November 1990.

## Fund-raising event to aid Iraq

By Odeh Odeh  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two artistic plates painted by Lama and Dana Khreis were sold Sunday for JD 7,300 at an auction organised at Amra Hotel in Amman to support the people of Iraq.

Upon opening the auction, which was organised by Mobilisation and Emergency Committee at the Professional Association Complex, Mr. Khalaf Massadeh contributed JD 1,000 in support of Iraq.

Following the opening of the auction, donors were forthcoming with cash and in-kind donations which altogether totalled JD 7,300.

The first bidder at the auction, Mutaz Shawareb, urged the audience to make generous contributions saying that the Arab Nation should support Iraq because it constitutes the first and last defence line for the whole Arab Nation.

The Mobilisation and Emergency Committee member

Mousa Ma'aitah praised the heroic struggle and fighting of the Iraqi army in various battle fields, recalling its sacrifices in Palestine, Jordan, the Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula.

Chairman of the Professional Association's Board, Tayseer Homsi, thanked Amra Hotel for organising this fund-raising event and expressed appreciation to the Hotel's Director Ali Bisheh for covering the costs of the event, including the dinner which the hotel management hosted.

# Jordan Times

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## Stampeding for spoils of war

THE ROLE of Western Europe in the execution of the military solution to the Gulf crisis has brought to the fore the issue of U.S.-European cooperation — or the lack of it — in the political life and problems of the Middle East and the region. There was a time especially prior to World War II when the greater Middle East region was a reserve for the European capitals. It was basically London and Paris which carved for themselves spheres of influence in the area and which found expression in the Sykes-Picot accord in 1916. Ever since the second war, however, the region began to fall under the U.S. umbrella. Throughout the decades that followed, this area of the world was zigzagging between the U.S. and European poles, but with Washington steadily consolidating its presence and clout. For both Western worlds, Middle Eastern oil, especially Arab oil, was the prize that was coveted throughout the ebb and flow of the competing Western gravitational pulls.

The Suez Canal campaign by Britain and France operating in league with Israel in the fifties was finally aborted by the U.S. when the late U.S. President Eisenhower issued his famous ultimatum to both countries to withdraw their attacking troops forthwith.

The 1967 Israeli-Arab war brought about another marked shift in European-U.S. policies in the Middle East. Former U.S. Under-Secretary of State George Ball described the shifting sands in the Middle East from under the feet of his country and the Western capitals as stemming from the fact while Washington had "taken over leadership in the Middle East from the Europeans, it failed to compel an Israeli troop withdrawal from occupied Arab territory after the 1967 war." This, Ball maintained, made the October war of 1973 inevitable. Mr. Ball went on to say that the Europeans simply "watched the U.S. preempt their leadership, then watched this leadership misused by their standards" and precipitated at the end an oil embargo that the world has yet to forget.

The Middle East is now set for yet another reacting of old parts played over again by the Europeans and the Americans. Even though the two sides appear to have acted in concert in the Kuwaiti conflict there are renewed signs that the old rivalry and competition between them might come to the fore again.

Accordingly, as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is making his Middle East tour to consolidate his country's military gains in the Gulf region, the Western capitals apparently would not sit idly by either.

As the troika foreign ministers of the European Community hurriedly hop from one Middle Eastern capital to the other staking their claims to speak out on the future of the area, Washington will be watching closely to make sure its European allies do not start stepping on its toes. The U.S. administration will most likely exact a price for any European gains from the Gulf war spoils.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE PALESTINIAN uprising against the presence of Israeli occupation forces has now entered its 40th month, with the Palestinian people more determined than ever before to regain their rights and their lands, said Al Rai Arabic daily Sunday. The paper said that the intifada seems to be the only machinery left for the Palestinians to regain... their homelands and their rights, having suffered frustrations as a result of the Arab countries' impotence to deal with the Palestine question and having felt let down by the international community which allowed the Palestine problem to fester for more than 40 years. The past seven months which saw the devastating war waged against Iraq had been sufficient for the world community to wake up to the realities in the Middle East region, and enough to urge the U.N. Security Council to act speedily to end Israel's occupation and implement resolutions 242 and 338, said the paper. Yet, nothing has materialised, and only empty promises came out from Washington which has lost all credibility in the Arab World, the paper said. The paper recalled the events in Lithuania which it said, had attracted Western media and aroused the hue and cry in the West which begs about the need to grant people their legitimate rights and which pretends that it is concerned over the fate of oppressed nations. The current tour of James Baker in the Middle East has not convinced the Palestinian people to give up their uprising which, the paper said, remains the only tool in the Palestinian people's hands to fight for their freedom and regain their homeland usurped by the aggressors backed by Washington. It expressed the view that since America and the world community are keeping silent about Israel's atrocities and condoning Zionist actions, the Palestinians have no alternative but to pursue the struggle.

A columnist in Al Rai daily Sunday urges the government to scrap the temporary regulations on the use of private cars on alternate days at least during the holy month of Ramadan. Salah Abdul Samad says that the Jordanian citizens have now become used to measures requiring saving of fuel by all means, but they are bound to be in need of their private cars throughout the holy month which starts March 17 and until after the Eid al Fiter feast for social and economic reasons. The writer expresses the view that Jordan's strategic supplies of oil would not be affected by relaxing the regulations a bit in Ramadan during which demand for transport will be higher than the rest of the year, and during which people tend to have closer social contacts than other months. The writer also notes that the government ought to give the public a chance to prove that everyone is now concerned over saving fuel, and this could be done during the coming holy month. He also notes that the general situation is showing gradual improvement as tension is receding, giving self-confidence to the public and promoting among citizens the sense of awareness and the need to safeguard national interests.

## Weekly Political Pulse

# Time to talk about new elections

IN his keynote speech to the country in the aftermath of the catastrophic Gulf war, His Majesty King Hussein addressed many issues confronting Jordan as well as the entire Arab World. One of the cardinal points highlighted by the King was the element of democracy and the need to consolidate it in the country in order to serve as a good example for the rest of the Arab states to emulate and benefit from. I take it that the consolidation of the democratic process in Jordan would necessarily take place and root only after the National Charter is adopted by a popular vote. As a matter of fact the King talked at length about the pivotal role of the Charter in the continuing process of perfecting the parliamentary system in the country. The significance of the Charter in Jordan's ongoing democratic experiment, therefore, cannot be over emphasised. Suffice to recall that the last national elections in the country were conducted without the benefit of precise and coherent political parties, something that the Charter will address and redress. This is not to mention the fact that the turnout in the 1989 elections was anything but satisfactory for a variety of reasons on the top of which was the absence of political parties over which the people may rally.

To be sure there were many shortcomings in the election law of the land that was applicable when the elections took place. Many thought and rightly so that such shortcomings had interfered with the attainment of a more perfect representation of the people of the country. Nevertheless the last national elections in the country were a milestone in the democratisation process in Jordan. They were a good beginning from which the country was able to draw many conclusions and above all learn more about what needed to

be done to perfect even more the parliamentary system in the country, even though, it is generally conceded that the conditions under which they were held were anything but satisfactory in view of the fact that political thought in the country had no real opportunity to crystallise into political associations and parties with which Jordanians could relate to with reasonable precision. Such propositions lead one to hut one conclusion: the country would need new elections as soon as the National Charter becomes part of the organic law of the land.

Clearly such new elections cannot be held immediately after the adoption of the Charter because much time would be needed first to articulate and form few political parties established on grounds spelled out by the Charter. The existing parliament is well into its second year and it may well enter its third year before all the preparatory work is finalised for the next national elections. The timing of the next elections would be carefully chosen to balance competing considerations and policy requirements. Yet a decision on this issue would have to be taken in the shortest possible time in order to prepare the country and the people for the future and what it may entail in terms of adjustments that the country may need to take.

In other words, there is no way that democracy in Jordan can be consolidated any further without conducting new elections. Hopefully next time around the public's participation would be greater and more meaningful. Hopefully also, the country by then would have completed its return to normalcy. Most of all, then the dire multi-dimensional impacts of the Gulf war would have waned and all but behind us, and the real prospects for the

resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflicts would be within reach. Otherwise leaving such broad political issues and conflicts unresolved would naturally invite extremism among the electorate. Voters cannot be expected to cast their votes unaffected or disturbed by what goes around them. If a permanent and just solution to the Palestinian case is still not in sight and the deep-rooted reasons behind the Gulf conflict are not addressed thoroughly, Jordanian voters can only be expected to react to them and vote accordingly.

Last but not least, the bread and butter issues cannot but influence the votes of Jordanians and determine their political orientations. As things stand now, unemployment is running very high, the economy is stagnant and the prospects for the future still do not appear promising. Even with the best intentions, Jordan can never on its own and without generous economic support cope with the heavy burdens placed on its shoulders. Neither the leadership nor the people would want to be in a situation where they would have to beg for support from any part of the world. They would rather suffer and keep their problems to themselves than risk hurting their dignity and honour. Yet the stability and welfare of Jordan remains an integral part of the regional security. The prospective Jordanian voters would not want to contribute to this elusive security if their pressing needs were violated or neglected.

Next Jordanians are to all intents and purposes just around the corner. If the ground work is not initiated now in order to give Jordanian voters a semblance of hope, they will surely take their anger and frustrations on the candidates and choose accordingly.

# How and why the U.S. turned against Iraq

By Donald Neff

DISTURBING questions about a strange twist in U.S. policy against Iraq following the Iran-Iraq war are being raised by a most unlikely source — an official study by the U.S. Army War College. Even stranger is that this official study strongly hints — but does not openly claim — the new U.S. anti-Iraq policy is more likely to serve Israeli aims than American interests in the Middle East. Needless to point out, the destruction of Iraq's military machine in the Gulf war accomplished these aims.

The views on the policy switch are contained in *Iraqi Power and U.S. Security in the Middle East*, a 93-page booklet published by the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College. It was written by three scholars, at the institute, Stephen C. Pellegrini, Douglas V. Johnson, and Leif R. Rosenberger. Although the book let wars that the views are the authors' and not the army's, it is being sold through government book-stores alongside such publications as congressional reports and official histories.

The study was published in early 1990, by which time authors warned with prescience that the U.S. was "on a collision course" with Iraq, which it found "unfortunately and unnecessarily." And they warned: "The (U.S.) policy certainly renders comfort to the Israelis but it could provoke bitter consequences from Baghdad."

Intriguingly, the study identified the sudden policy switch from the pro-Iraqi stance Washington had pursued during the last half of the Iran-Iraq war as occurring a month after the August 1988 ceasefire in that war. This coincided with Israel becoming acutely worried about Iraq's strength after its victory over Iran. Israel's fears were based on the fact that Iraq had emerged as the strongest Arab state, armed with missiles that posed for the first time a strategic challenge to Israel's superiority.

**A sudden switch in policy**  
It was at this juncture that there was suddenly a "180-degree shift" in U.S. policy. According to the authors: "... the State Department abruptly, and in what many viewed as a sensational manner, condemned Iraq for allegedly using chemicals against its Kurdish population." Soon Israel's threats against Iraq stopped.

Although the study does not make a connection between the policy shift and the prevention of an Israeli attack, the coincidence raises fascinating questions. Did the Reagan administration, fearing a rash act by Israel, head it off by colluding with the Jewish state to pursue a common anti-Iraq policy? Was there an agreement — as there had been in the early 1970s in aiding the Kurdish rebellion — to weaken Iraq by damaging its economy and blocking its access to Western technology? A look at the record indicates there is enough circumstantial evidence to raise serious suspicion.

First of all, the policy was personally initiated by then Secretary of State George Shultz, a man identified with his devotion to furthering Israel's interests during his tenure. Moreover, the policy switch was announced in the most humiliating way, as though to guarantee a rupture with Iraq. Shultz made his incendiary charges just two hours before Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, was to arrive at the State Department on Sept. 8, 1988. Instead of a warm welcome, as Aziz might have ex-

pected, Shultz took the opportunity to publicly condemn Iraq for using poison gas in August against its Kurdish population. Equally interesting is the fact that Shultz delivered this rude slap in the face of Iraq's minister without any serious evidence, according to the authors, who added: "We find it impossible to confirm the State Department's claim that gas was used in this instance. Nonetheless, Secretary of State Shultz stood by U.S. accusation."

Even more intriguing is the fact that the shaky information that Shultz acted on came entirely from the Senate, well known for its sensitivities to Israel's desires. Despite the lack of any corroborating evidence, the Senate the day after Shultz's allegation rushed in an unanimously passed sanctions against Iraq. They were so extreme that Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Claiborne Pell described them as the strongest in decades. Although the sanctions ultimately failed to go into law, Shultz's unusual public charges and the Senate's precipitous action had an effect that was surely welcomed in Israel. But they predictably enraged the Iraqis. On Sept. 11, an estimated 150,000 Iraqis demonstrated past the U.S. embassy protesting U.S. actions, the first mass demonstration in twenty years in Baghdad and the first ever against the United States.

**The road to mutual animosity**  
The die was cast. Thereafter, relations between the two countries quickly deteriorated. Within two months Baghdad and Washington were well on the road to mutual animosity. On Nov. 17, 1988, the United States expelled an unidentified Iraqi diplomat from Washington, ostensibly in retaliation for the expulsion of Haywood Rankin, head of the American embassy's political section in Baghdad, several days earlier.

During 1989, relations further deteriorated, with inflammatory charges in Congress against Saddam Hussein and the repeated airing of charges of Iraq's human rights violations. At the same time, Israel claimed that Iraq had secretly embarked on a crash programme to develop nuclear warheads. Soon U.S. analysts were also being quoted in the media as being convinced Iraq was striving to become a nuclear power.

By 1990, human rights became a major element in the anti-Iraq campaign. On Feb. 10, Middle East Watch, a new human rights monitoring group based in New York, charged Iraq as "a well organised police state (and) one of the most brutal and repressive regimes in power today." Within two weeks, the State Department's annual *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1989* issued about the toughest criticism in the report by finding Iraq's "human rights record remained abysmal" in 1989.

**The death of Gerald Bull**  
Soon other issues began intruding. On March 22, Gerald Vincent Bull, 62, Canadian artillery expert, was shot dead outside his Brussels apartment after being publicly linked with Iraq's weapons programme. Speculation was that Bull was a victim of Israeli assassins. Less than a week later, four Iranians and a French woman were arrested in Britain by customs officials who accused them of trying to smuggle to Iraq *kryzons*, high precision capacitors that can be used to trigger nuclear weapons. The arrests resulted from a joint U.S.-British operation.

By April, tensions between

Washington, London and Tel Aviv and Baghdad had risen so high that Jordan charged that the West was conducting a "vicious and harsh" campaign against Iraq. As if to prove the case, the United States expelled another Iraqi diplomat in the first week of April, and, on April 9, the Commerce Department cancelled an aerospace trade mission to Iraq "in light of the events of the last couple of weeks."

By this time, Iraq was provoked enough to give public vent to its suspicions that it was the target of a plot. On April 11, Tariq Aziz charged that "Israel wants to attack Iraqi industrial and scientific sites to maintain the balance of power, which has changed... When an Arab country achieves (technological advances) then the whole fuss comes, the comments, suspicions and attempts to discredit the image of that Arab country."

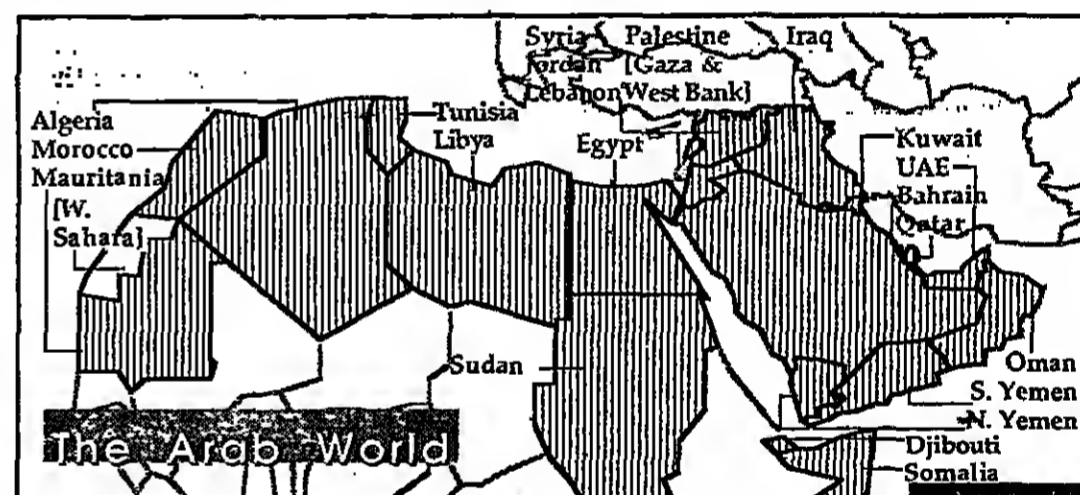
A similar message was delivered personally on April 12 by Saddam Hussein to a group of visiting U.S. senators. He charged the U.S., Britain and Israel were conducting a campaign to malign him, to "tarnish his country and send out fake reports." Washington's answer came on May 21, when the Department of Agriculture announced it was delaying an Iraqi request to purchase \$300 million in commodities. During all this time, there was a drumbeat of provocative and harsh denunciations of Iraq delivered on the floor of Congress, demands to know why the adminis-

tration was still dealing with Iraq and inflammatory personal attacks on Saddam Hussein.

## Suspicious of a plot

The suspicion that Iraq was the target of an orchestrated plot was so wide spread in the Middle East by the end of May that the final communiqué of the Baghdad summit of the Arab League specifically supported Iraq against what it called a "Western campaign" to deny Baghdad access to advanced technology in order to make it more vulnerable to Israeli attack.

The foreboding that there was Israel-U.S. collusion, of course, is taking the veiled suspicions hinted at in the army study far beyond any voiced in the study itself. The study concluded merely that Congress had acted out of



# Syria emerges winner from Gulf war

By Patrick Worsnip

CAIRO — Syria, which once figured with Libya in the West's rogues' gallery of Arab trouble-makers, has emerged transformed from the Gulf war, embraced by fellow Arabs, applauded in the West — and a good deal richer.

Outwardly, little has changed. The same President Hafez Al Assad still runs the same Baathist government with the same iron hand. But, by sending 20,000 troops to the U.S.-led multinational force, Damascus has ended the isolation from which it suffered for so many years in the Arab World and beyond.

Syria and Egypt have come out as big winners from the conflict. A meeting in Damascus last week assigned them to contribute the military muscle of a new eight-nation Arab group that will defend the Gulf from any future attack. In return they will get economic aid from the six Gulf states.

"Syria returned to the Arab fold after years of isolation and is now, for a change, a partner in the victorious Arab wing," said Egyptian commentator Salama Ahmed Salama.

"Syria has benefited a great deal and regained its credibility as a pivotal state in the region." Joining the allies was not without its dangers for the 60-year-old Assad. He risked discontent at home and criticism from other radical Arab states for throwing his lot with the very U.S. imperialists he inveighed against for years.

Few Arab or western analysts doubt that one of Assad's main motives was his long-standing enmity towards Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. The two men lead

rival wings of the Baath party, which preaches Arab nationalism.

It was apparently the same motive that drove Assad to side with Tehran in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, a move which earned him the hostility of most of the rest of the Arab World.

Now, the Syrian leader has witnessed the collapse of Saddam's ambitions. The million-man Iraqi army is shattered, the country is in ruins.

Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat, another of Assad's long-time foes, has also suffered a diplomatic setback as a result of his support for Saddam. Saudi Arabia is now talking to pro-Syrian Palestinians.

But the payoffs had already started earlier for Assad.

Last October, the United States looked the other way as the Syrian army crushed the Lebanese Christian leader General Michel Aoun and finally put the Damascus-backed government of President Elias Hrawi in control of Beirut and much of Lebanon.

"If you remember, Iraq gave Aoun weapons and that door has been closed now. Also the Palestinians opposed to Syria in Lebanon are hit and circumstances are much better for Syria in Lebanon," Salama said.

In November, Assad met U.S. President George Bush in Geneva for the first Syrian-American summit for more than 11 years, even though Syria remains on a U.S. list of states alleged to sponsor terrorism.

On November 28, Britain restored diplomatic relations with Damascus after a four-year break caused by suspicions of Syrian involvement in an attempt to

blow up an Israeli aircraft flying from London.

The economic benefits are rolling in too.

Some unconfirmed estimates in Cairo put the sum that Syria may already have received from the Gulf states as high as \$1.5 billion. The European Community has released some \$200 million in aid frozen since 1986.

Syrian markets are filled with imported goods available only in small quantities before the Gulf crisis, and the government has eased hard currency regulations affecting private sector traders.

Not everything about the Gulf war may have been encouraging

for Assad, however. The dismal performance of Iraq's Soviet-made weaponry against the high-tech American onslaught can hardly have been lost on Syria, whose own army is also largely Soviet-armed.

Assad's long-term goal of achieving strategic parity with Israel to back up Syrian efforts to recover the Golan Heights, captured by Israel in 1967, now looks even harder to attain.

But the new Arab and western favour should enable Syria, in the words of one Egyptian analyst, "to enter the peace process, when it starts, on firmer ground than before."

## LETTERS

## Hypocrisy reigns

To the Editor:

THE British are a dishonest race confusing self interest with right and wrong, fact with fiction.

What is the difference between the outlawed IRA bombing London and killing innocent people and British warplanes bombing Baghdad and killing many more innocent people. The IRA also say that they do not intend to harm innocent people which is why they give a warning. Bombs dropped from bombers gave no warning of where they will land and explode.

More innocent people have been killed in a month in Iraq by British bombers than the IRA have killed over years, Mrs. Thatcher condemned the violence of the IRA saying that violence methods against Iraq. Hypocrisy reigns in Britain. It could be argued that the IRA have more cause to fight for a united Ireland than the British have to fight for Kuwait. If God is on any side he cannot be on the side of Britain or the USA.

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هذا من الصحف

## Baker

(Continued from page 1)

object to such a conference because they fear unfavourable terms for a settlement might be imposed on Israel.

Even so, the gathering support for Bush's proposal that Israel give up territory poses a problem for Shamir, who wants to retain the West Bank and Gaza.

Bush, in a comment directed toward Israel in his speech to Congress, said: "Geography cannot guarantee security and security does not come from military power alone."

Prince Bandar shrugged off a question about whether Saudi Arabia was ready to recognise Israel.

The Gulf Security Force in the four-point Bush proposal would be manned primarily by Egyptian and Syrian troops, supplemented by U.S. ground and air units and warships. The permanent force would protect the oil fields against threats.

The three other points of the U.S. initiative are economic cooperation, a slowdown in the influx of weapons to the region and promoting Arab-Israeli peace.

Baker arrived in Cairo from Saudi Arabia Sunday on the third stop of his tour.

Baker, and Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Meguid, who accompanied him on the flight from Riyadh, did not speak to reporters.

Diplomats said the Egyptian economy, badly hurt by the Gulf crisis, was likely to be a major topic in talks between Mr. Baker and Mr. Mubarak.

Washington cancelled around \$7 billion in Egyptian military debt in appreciation for Cairo's strong stand against Iraq and has been urging its Western allies to consider further debt writeoff.

Diplomats say Cairo has asked Western governments to press the International Monetary Fund to ease its conditions for a standby credit accord.

Mr. Baker is due to leave Egypt Monday for Israel, Syria and Turkey before travelling on to the Soviet Union.

## Israel

(Continued from page 1)

for several hours Sunday over whether to seek a meeting with Baker during his 48-hour visit here.

While Baker said he would like to meet with Palestinians here, the leaders from the occupied Arab territories said they would await a formal invitation before deciding whether to see him.

"The tradition in diplomatic behaviour is when somebody is coming to the region he declares whom he wants to talk to," said Ghassan Khatib, a pro-PLO leader.

"He (Baker) did declare whom he wants to talk to, and he excluded Palestinians and Jordanians," Khatib added.

The U.N. Security Council resolutions are the basis for Bush's call for a territory-for-peace solution, but Shamir's right-wing government opposes giving up any land that Israel occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

Four ultra-right cabinet ministers argued against the 1989 autonomy plan, urging that Israel try to make peace with surrounding Arab nations before dealing with the Palestinians, radio reports said.

Shamir met Sunday with both his full cabinet and with a smaller defence cabinet. Newspapers had predicted Israeli leaders would decide to resist U.S. pressure to give up land and stick with their 1989 plan.

The daily Yedioth Ahronoth said Shamir would meet Baker with "open arms but clenched fists." The daily Maariv ran a cartoon showing Bush in a sheriff's outfit replacing a "wanted poster" of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein with one of Shamir.

After Sunday's meetings Transport Minister Moshe Katzar said Israel had no intention of giving up the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, nor the annexed Golan Heights.

Recent reports have said the United States hopes to demilitarise the strategic heights — occupied from Syria in the 1967 war — to lead toward an Israeli-Syrian peace.

Parliament speaker Dov Shilansky chose Sunday to initiate the first air route from Tel Aviv to the Golan Heights and said on Israel Radio: "Every step here was liberated with blood from our children... it is a part of the state of Israel."

Meanwhile Israeli police, expecting protests by both Palestinians and Jews, sent reinforcements to occupied Jerusalem Sunday ahead of a visit by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Some 600 policemen will form the core of the security force during Baker's two-day visit starting Monday, police said. The force will swell at times to 1,500, or 10 security men for each mem-

ber of Baker's entourage of officials and press.

"Our estimate is that extremist elements will try to whip up tempers and there could be disturbances as a result of the visit," Jerusalem Deputy Police Commander Moshe Friedman said, adding that he was referring to both Arabs and Jews.

Police said they suspected the militant Jewish Kach Movement of trying to set fire to a U.S. government-run Cultural Centre in Jerusalem Sunday. Beside the damaged front door, the assailants spray-painted a warning in English for the United States not to interfere in Israeli affairs.

A major challenge will be to secure the alleys of Jerusalem's Old City for a tour by Baker. Israel Radio said he would visit the Old City.

Police firing on Arab worshippers at Al Aqsa Mosque killed 18 people in October, sparking international condemnation of Israel.

Police lifted a curfew on the Issawiya area of East Jerusalem and reported the city calm Sunday after sporadic protests last week.

Palestinians have been waging a 39-month uprising against Israeli occupation.

## PLO

(Continued from page 1)

way over too far in support of (Iraq). They've lost credibility with this office," he said.

PLO leaders said earlier they saw positive elements in comments by Bush Wednesday saying that Middle East peace should be based on U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 — which talk of swapping occupied land for peace.

But Arafat said Saturday that words should be followed by actions.

There is an ambivalence among Palestinians after the Gulf war. Dreams that Iraq might still pull off a miracle, and worries that the PLO backed a loser.

The latest leaflet from leaders of the Palestinian uprising appeared in two versions, prepared by rival factions of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Their headlines — one praising "the glory and valor of Iraq," the other urging "loyalty to the PLO" — reflect the disagreement over how to pursue Palestinian independence in the new political environment.

"No one expected the war to end so fast," said Riad Malki, a professor of engineering. "People are in the process of thinking, of trying to find ways to proceed."

In Malki's view, neither leaflet is wrong.

The one focused on Iraq "still reflects the mood of many Palestinians" who cling to the hope that Iraq will somehow keep its pledge of bringing about a Palestinian state, Malki said.

Other Palestinians, however, are angry and disillusioned by the empty rhetoric from Iraq, and feel PLO chief Yasser Arafat made a mistake in backing the Iraqi leader.

Palestinians generally are rallying to the PLO leadership's defence as Western and some Arab nations attack Arafat for supporting Iraq.

Still, prominent Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip believe new strategies are needed to capitalise on the emerging international consensus that the Israeli-Palestinian problem finally must be resolved.

Bush says America can be a catalyst, but both sides must compromise. The European Community already has sent foreign ministers on a fact-finding mission.

Faisal Hussein, a Palestinian leader who supports the PLO, insists the solution, like that of the Iraq-Kuwait dispute, be based on U.N. resolutions.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, are home to 1.7 million Palestinians and the centre of an uprising against Israeli rule that began more than three years ago.

Hussein rejects further consideration of Israel's 1989 peace initiative, which would give the territories only limited autonomy. He calls it an effort by Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli prime minister, "to gain more and more time" to sustain his pledge never to yield an inch of land.

Israel has said it wants to revive the peace plan, which has been stalled since its introduction.

There is general agreement among Palestinians that peace must be based on the U.N. resolutions, but increasing debate on how to proceed.

Al Quds, a pro-PLO newspaper in occupied Jerusalem, published a front-page story last week suggesting Palestinians again may seek the help of His Majesty King Hussein as a peace intermediary.

The King remains one of the few Arab leaders acceptable to some Israeli leaders as well as Palestinians and the West.

The PLO undercut an earlier joint peace effort in the mid-

By Serene Halasa  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein promised the battle for Kuwait would be the mother of all battles. But Baghdad's decision to withdraw after holding out for 40 days under massive allied bombardment "is a mystery that only historians will be able to answer," Peter Arnett, the CNN correspondent, who covered the war from Iraq, said after arriving here late Friday night.

Mr. Arnett went to Baghdad on Jan. 12. Eight days after the start of the war Mr. Arnett was summoned to see the Iraqi president. Mr. Arnett believes President Hussein intended through the interview to "wave to the world his chemical, biological and nuclear capabilities." Arnett added that although the president seemed confident of himself, the circumstances surrounding their meeting betrayed that confidence. "We met in a house in the suburbs of Baghdad. This arrangement betrayed the confidence he (Saddam Hussein) was trying to present," Arnett said.

Mr. Arnett, the only foreign reporter allowed to stay in Iraq after the outbreak of the Gulf war, described Iraq as a "demoralised, unhappy, crippled state." He said that the country's infrastructure was totally destroyed. Telecommunications, electricity, and water installations were hit many times during the air raids.

"Can you imagine 18 million people with no lights, heat or water?" Arnett asked.

According to Mr. Arnett, Iraq has been reduced to a very primitive way of life. He said, for example, that the only time one could get hot coffee or tea was early in the morning, and

1980s, but may welcome an intermediary in the postwar climate.

Some Palestinians want to enlist Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia as brokers of a settlement.

That strategy involves risk. The Arab allies are furious with Arafat's stance in the Gulf war and might even insist on his removal as a condition of becoming involved.

There are signs that some Palestinians in the territories would like more independence from the PLO leadership abroad, to provide flexibility.

Dedi Zucker, a left-wing member of the Israeli parliament, told the Hebrew newspaper Haaretz he sensed that kind of shift in a recent meeting with eight Palestinian leaders from the territories.

Zucker noted that Zionists in Palestine took the reins from Jewish leaders in Europe to create Israel, and indicated the Palestinians were moving in the same direction.

"There is no definite probability that this scenario will come about, but there is great potential," he said.

## Kuwait

(Continued from page 1)

ahead. Most spoke of returning.

"What choice do we have?" one woman said recently. "If we had, Palestine we would never need Kuwait."

ter was on for only an hour a day, "between 5 and 6." He said Iraq had no electricity, except for some governmental buildings.

"The air war was aimed at undermining Iraq's infrastructure, and destroying the confidence of the people in their government," he said. "I believe that the people of Iraq did not understand what would happen to them. They did not know that the war would be fought in their own backyard. They thought it would be much like the Iran-Iraq war," Mr. Arnett said.

"The air war was aimed at undermining Iraq's infrastructure, and destroying the confidence of the people in their government."

Mr. Arnett, who had covered the Vietnam war as a print journalist, said that the bombardment of Iraq was similar to the eight year bombardment of the north Vietnamese capital Hanoi. "In the first few days of bombardment, stores closed down, people who afforded to leave fled the capital Baghdad, the streets were empty. There was total shock and fear of the enormous power of the allied war machine," Mr. Arnett told the Jordan Times in an interview.

This feeling of fear, according to Arnett, changed after a few days when people thought that the bombing was aimed only at command and control targets.

"People came out of their homes and shelters, and few stores opened because at this point it became clear in Baghdad that the bombing was aimed at the command and

control targets," Mr. Arnett said.

A few weeks into the war, people realised that civilian targets were also targeted and bombed especially in Najaf and Basra. Mr. Arnett said that there was a great sense of anger and fear among the people in the areas that were hit, because up to the third week they had believed that this air war was not aimed against civilian targets.

"Everything changed when they hit the Ameriyeh shelter," Mr. Arnett said. "It was the first time that we saw such

an incident up close," he added.

In a description of what happened at the shelter, in which hundreds of Iraqi women and children were killed, Mr. Arnett said that he along with 25 other foreign reporters were taken to the location, only half an hour after the shelter was hit and were allowed to film anything they wanted to without any kind of censorship by the Iraqi officials. "For three days we filmed and reported without censorship. I think they wanted the story to be told; they wanted to show that they did not have anything to hide," he said.

"The shelter looked like some kind of a terrible natural disaster. It reminded me of the earthquake in Mexico City, where buildings collapsed trapping people. In this case, it was a bomb that trapped people in

200,000 Palestinian residents had "behaved very loyally to their adopted homeland Kuwait."

## Bush

(Continued from page 1)

part of the coalition, per se, but nevertheless in the defence of Saudi Arabia, having some soldiers on the ground. That's a distinction that I wanted to say to you, sir, we understand and respect."

Q: How do you see, Mr. President, your relation with so-called Arab solution states?

President Bush: Good — and better. It depends on you mean. Morocco was an Arab solution state, and I feel very respectful of, and friendship towards, His Majesty the King. I mean, that wasn't strained by this. You've got a problem if you're referring to Jordan.

Q: The Amman incident. President Bush: Yes, Amman. Let it cool down here. Calm. Take a little time. A little hurt feelings out there, disappointment in the United States still there. But a recognition that a stable Jordan is in everybody's interests. And I don't want to — I mean, a lot of what happened in the Jordan situation was aimed not just against the United States, but some of the other neighbours in the area.

And when that happens, I'd like to know how they feel. I'd like to know how King Fahd or Hosni Mubarak feels or how the Kuwaiti's feel about Jordan and about — and we can help. I mean, we've had a good relationship with the Hashemite King. But I've expressed my public disappointment because I think Jordan has swung way over on this question. And I'm not saying it was all his fault because there were some people out there in the streets — and they're still out there yelling about me, personally, and the whole United States — obviously I'm just this target for that.

But my view is, hey, we've all got to live together in peace so let's take a little time now and sort this one out. We don't want to see a radicalised Jordan, and yet I must confess to a certain disappointment in terms of how that Jordanian question will — I'm disappointed with some of the Jordan press, frankly, that did nothing but blame everything on the United States. They know better than that. And yet they did it.

But I've learned in life — maybe it's because I'm 66 now — take a little time, let it simmer, and then let's try to put together a more peaceful Middle East.

So I have no rancor or bitterness. But again, there is an area — let the Arabs work their magic out here. Let's have — you're talking about an Arab solution. Let them come to me and say — all of them, including Jordan —

the shelter and burned them alive. We could smell the bodies (of the dead)," Mr. Arnett said recalling the incident.

"I knew this was a critical story, one that would be used as an example by critics of this war of irresponsible bombing. But I was a messenger, and it was a story I had to tell," Mr. Arnett said adding that this story was the most significant throughout the war, because it would have altered the policy of the U.S.-led coalition.

When President Saddam Hussein presented his proposal to withdraw from Kuwait on Feb. 15, "there was a chaotic joy in Baghdad. Iraqi people embraced each other, people said: 'it's over, the war is over, our boys will come home.' There was shooting in the air, the sound of gunfire was heard all over the place," Arnett said, adding that the overwhelming joy of the Iraqis could be felt in the streets. "I knew the war was not over. One young man walked up to me and said 'Mr. Peter is the war really over? I said no, it is not. But he did not believe me,'" he recalled.

"When the sirens were heard again in Iraq, 'there was real disappointment because the Iraqis felt that their government was unable to stop the war anymore. They knew that the multi-national force wanted to destroy his (President Hussein's) military,'" Mr. Arnett said.

But when the ground war started, Mr. Arnett said people in Iraq were more united in their resolve to fight it out. "They felt the responsibility to challenge the allies to some degree. They said 'this is it, let's fight it.' They were united behind their government about the ground war," he said.

As events unfolded and



Peter Arnett (Photo by Kimberly Moore)

news of what was happening on the front reached Baghdad, "there was great disbelief in the enormity of defeat. The surrender was fast," he said. "This shook the foundation of faith in the government. People did not know what happened. There was great unhappiness with the destruction of the military. This is a very sad country."

According to Mr. Arnett, Jordanian reporters who were able to freely mix with the Iraqis reported a big debate was going on among the Iraqis concerning the future of their country.

"People want a greater say in the fate of their country," Mr. Arnett said. He said that according to "second hand views," some people thought that if the embargo was going to stay in effect, Iraq will find it very difficult to rebuild with President Saddam in power.

"For the masses, Saddam is still a god, and I don't know what it will take to turn that around," he said.

As for the attitude of the Iraqis towards the Arab

World, Mr. Arnett said that Jordanians and their leadership were held in high esteem. "They speak very highly of King Hussein. To them Jordan is a life line," Mr. Arnett said.

"The Iraqis believe that there is a difference between the Arab masses and the position of their governments. But they still cling to the idea of pan-Arabism, and believe that it is more vital in Iraq under Saddam Hussein than it is in Egypt under Mubarak," he said.

Mr. Arnett confirmed that Baghdad was under control, and said he did not know when or if he will be going back. He said he believed that the reason behind expelling all Western reporters from Baghdad was because some reporters infiltrated into restricted areas in southern Iraq. He also added during an interview conducted upon his arrival in Jordan that the Iraqis felt that there was nothing to report on anymore, because now they have internal problems to deal with.

here's the way we ought to work together. And not us try to dictate, to say to King Fahd, 'Hey, you've got to do this.' He wouldn't do it anyway. He's a strong-willed person. knows the area.

So my answer — disappointment. Determination to think that one day we'll have a better relationship with a country with whom we've always had a good relationship, try to recognise their problems.

But it's going to take time. There is some hurt here — some hurt in the neighbourhood, there is some damage to a bilateral relationship.

## Guards

(Continued from page 1)

"In the holy city of Najaf there was a message yesterday (Saturday) which was taped and we have the tape in Tehran."

"The commander of the forces there tells his command that the attacks of his forces with artillery, helicopter gunships and tanks were useless in defeating the opposition. 'Do you authorise the use of the liquid weapon,' is the expression used."

"We think what is meant by this expression is the chemical weapons... the answer was: 'in your position, you have the authority of the president and do what you see is necessary'."

He said the opposition was only directing the uprising against

the Iraqi president and giving it support but it was being carried out on the ground by ordinary Iraqis.

"Today the Iraqi isn't asking for his rights and dignity, he is demanding the right to live," the black-turbaned cleric said. "The Iraqi will lay down his life until the last drop of blood."

Mudarrissi is in Beirut to attend the largest conference of anti-regime opposition groups.

They want to step up their revolt tagging since the Iraqi army was routed in Kuwait by U.S.-led allies 10 days ago.

U.S. military sources in Saudi Arabia said reconnaissance flights over Iraq had picked up signs that chemical weapons were being deployed but no evidence that they had been used so far.

Opposition leader Sheikh Abu Maitham Al-Saghir said on Sunday gunners fired poison gas shells into rebel-held Najaf but the gas proved to be harmless as it had passed its expiry date.

Saghir said conditions in cities taken by rebel forces were very poor and cholera and typhoid epidemics had broken out.

He said 29 Iraqi cities and hundreds of towns and villages and about three quarters of Iraq was controlled by the rebels.

"Tens of people are dying daily from starvation in the cities of the uprising... we cry out for (medical) help. We want urgent aid from the Iraqi people from humanitarian organisations."

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## Damage to Kuwait's huge oil reservoir could be permanent

KUWAIT (R) — The hundreds of wellhead fires could permanently damage the huge oil reservoir beneath the sands of the Kuwait desert.

Some of the 400 fires raging in the Burgan oil fields near Kuwait City are sending great columns of steam into the sky along with the thick black clouds of burning crude, showing that water which provides the pressure for the wells is being sucked up through the oil.

"The fires are ... damaging the reservoir, the efficiency of the fields," Oil Minister Rashid Salem Al Ameer told reporters. "There is some water coming, that damages the reservoir."

A reduction in pressure in the fields, industry leaders say, could add to the cost of extracting crude in Kuwait, which before the Iraqi invasion accounted for nearly 7.5 per cent of Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) production.

Additional water content in the crude could add to the cost of refining.

"We do not know yet whether the damage is permanent or not permanent," Ahmed Murad, manager of system development for the Kuwait Oil Company, which operates the oil fields, told Reuters Sunday. "We will know when the fires are put out" — which could take two years.

Ameer said it was "very difficult to define the extent of the destruction of our oil installations," but added that the damage would "definitely have an impact" on OPEC pricing policy.

Adel Sharhan of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company, which runs the country's refineries,

said Kuwait's refineries are among the most modern in the world and should be able to adjust "to a higher water content in crude oil without adding greatly to production costs."

However, Ameer said it could take three years to get the sabotaged refineries working at capacity again as repair work must take second place to firefighting.

Meanwhile, the fires continued to burn off as much as 80,000 dollars worth of crude oil each minute.

Morad said firefighting equipment such as bulldozers, cranes and heavy-duty pumps would begin being airlifted into Kuwait Tuesday and he expected the work of putting out the flames to begin in earnest next Friday.

He said satellite photographs of the oil fields provided by the U.S. army showed that more than 500 of Kuwait's 1,000 wells continued to burn. Some fires had gone out as the pressure driving the oil towards the earth's surface slackened.

In 45 or 60 days, he said, the oil fields should be able to provide 50,000 barrels per day to Kuwait's power stations, which are capable of operating on crude oil as well as refined petroleum.

Before the Iraqi invasion Kuwait was exporting 1.5 million barrels of oil per day out of its oil reserves of 90 billion barrels.

Officials say Kuwait has been importing small amounts of petroleum products in recent days to cope with the devastation left behind by the Iraqis, but Morad said this would not last long.

"We are used to being exporters," he said with a smile. "We do not plan to become importers."

## European car sales may drop by million

GENEVA (R) — Car sales in Western Europe, hit by recession in key markets, could drop by as much as a million vehicles this year despite the quick end to the Gulf war, industry analysts and research institutes say.

The experts said they expect sales to tumble to between 12.2 and 12.8 million in 1991 from 13.2 million in 1990.

Most chief executives from Europe's six biggest carmakers also see lower sales, but their estimates are nearer 13 million.

"Europe is moving towards a recession. The Gulf war didn't help, but it was an excuse for weak (car) market conditions. Things are still going to be bad in 1991," said Philip Wylie, auto analyst at Salomon Brothers.

Jacques Calvet and Raymond Levy, chief executives of Peugeot and Renault of France, expect sales to fall to 12.8 million, according to a survey by the independent London-based Economist Intelligence Unit taken before the end of the Gulf war.

But Lindsey Halstead from Ford of Europe thinks sales will increase by one to two per cent.

European sales soared in the late 1980s, climbing from 10.25 million in 1984 to a record 13.4 million in 1989 and overtaking North America in 1987 as the world's largest car market.

But national markets, led by Britain and Spain, began to decline last year. France and Italy are likely to join the economic slowdown this year and only Germany, the biggest market in Europe, has remained strong.

"As the market weakens, the profitability of all the big makers is hit, they all need to offer incentives, price cutting, extra specification, more advertising," says Philip Aytton, of stockbrokers Barclays de Zoete Wedd.

Companies such as Volkswagen A.G. and General Motors Corp's Adam Opel subsidiary, which have a high proportion of their sales in Germany, have been least affected by market weaknesses.

"If the decline in Italy and France gets like the U.K., Peugeot and Renault (of France) and (Italy's) Fiat look vulnerable," said Gavin Lauder, analyst at stockbrokers Kleinwort Benson Securities.

These companies have already announced temporary plant shutdowns and layoffs, but analysts believe the shakeout won't be serious enough to claim any victims this time around.

"I don't think anyone's in danger of going bust at the moment," said Susanne Oliver, European motor analyst at stockbrokers Hoare Govett.

She said the Swedish companies Saab, 50 per cent owned by General Motors, and Volvo, are having the worst problems but each has a healthy truck division to lean on.

"It's also difficult for Fiat. But if the downturn only lasts for one or two years, they can all hold on," Oliver said.

Some analysts are loath to predict the end of the downturn, saying there are just too many imponderables, including interest rates, oil prices, and Germany's booming economy which could reverse by the end of the year.

But many believe next year will see a recovery.

"European companies will survive alright in the short term," said Professor Dan Jones of the Cardiff Business School.

But he warned that there could be casualties when the market slips after new Japanese plants in Britain are up and running.

## Kuwait economy starts long struggle to recover after war

KUWAIT CITY (R) — Fighting for chocolate in a muddy street market and fighting oil-well fires, Kuwaitis are beginning a long struggle to recover from the Gulf war.

Once the richest nation in the world on a per-capita basis, Kuwait faces what one government minister says may be a \$200 billion, five-year drive to rebuild its shattered economy.

In a street market in Hawalli, a predominantly Palestinian area, people are bawling over small boxes of chocolate and prices are soaring for cigarettes, tobacco and other modest luxuries.

Bakeries are reopening and hundreds of people are forming queues for fresh bread.

The Iraqi dinar is still in use and it remains the chief currency in the few markets open in Kuwait City but the exchange rate has collapsed and a new currency yet to be created.

Kuwaiti dinars, illegal under seven months of Iraqi rule, have reappeared as Kuwaitis unearth caches of banknotes buried in gardens or hidden in walls.

Most purchases at the Hawalli street market were being conducted in Iraqi dinars, as in the occupation. But one thing had changed — the exchange rate.

The Iraqi dinar was back to pre-invasion values of about 10 to the Kuwaiti dinar, compared with the one-one arbitrary exchange rate enforced on Kuwait by Iraqis.

Thousands of Iraqi dinars were changing hands in the Hawalli market for a small selection of goods, a few eggs, Taiwanese

chocolate, Chinese underwear and the odd hot-water flask.

"Please tell the world we want cigarettes and batteries as soon as possible," said Kuwaiti shopper Abbas Khaja. "We have enough food. We have too much rice but we don't have cigarettes and batteries."

The goods that are available have skyrocketed in price as the "grey market" sets its own currency exchange rates, the currencies it will accept, and the prices the market can bear.

"These cigarettes cost me two and a half Kuwaiti dinars (about \$9 at pre-invasion rates)," said one man holding a packet of Marlboro. "Before the crisis I could have bought a box of 200."

One man selling a crate of Taiwanese chocolates — offered at 40 Kuwaiti dinars (\$140) a pack — was lucky to escape unhurt when a pack of shoppers pushed him aside in their box apart and disappeared into the crowd, chocolates in hand.

Uproarious scenes in the market, against a background of shattered storefronts and crippled heavy trucks, give a street-level indication of the extent of economic damage in Kuwait.

Water, electricity, gas and fuel supplies are still interrupted. A partial cabinet meeting of the Kuwaiti government last week assessed progress in tackling the crisis.

Housing Minister Yehia Fahd Al Simit said the cabinet heard figures of at least \$200 billion put on the cost of rebuilding Kuwait. Iraq would have to foot much of this bill in the form of war reparations extracted in oil, he suggested.

Based on the information we have, we believe a minimum of \$200 billion would be a very fair estimate," Simit told reporters.

Oil will be the key commodity in arguments over reparations. Kuwait oil officials say it could take five years to restore oil exports to their level before the Aug. 2 invasion and at least nine months before exports are resumed at all.

Iraq could fill that gap. Simit said Iraq could produce between 2.5 to three million barrels of oil a day. Kuwait could demand as much as 500,000 barrels a day for a lengthy period.

Regardless of a long-term struggle for reparations from Iraq, Kuwait is already spending hundreds of millions of dollars on emergency and medium-term reconstruction.

Altogether 280 contracts have been signed so far, according to United States officials helping in the clean-up.

Construction and communications companies — predominantly from the United States and Britain, the two largest Western components of the allied effort against Iraq — are queuing for contracts.

Senior U.S. officers involved in the task force freedom army group advising the Kuwaiti government said that engineering company Bechtel Group Inc, telecommunications company ATT and aerospace group Raytheon Inc, were working in Kuwait.

Bechtel is dealing with plans to put out hundreds of oil well fires.

Kuwait needs huge sums of money to restore its war-shattered economy and oilfields but bankers and economists believe the emirate's long-term cash squeeze may not be as bad as first thought.

Kuwait may face a fairly severe cash flow problem in the next 12 to 18 months. But the physical impossibility of absorbing tens of billions of dollars in capital reconstruction all at once, plus the need to preserve the flow of income from non-oil assets, means payments should be spread over a long period.

"Even if you add up all the needs and everyone worked day and night, there is a physical limit to the amount of capital you can absorb. It takes a long time to build a refinery, or an airport, said a senior economist at one Gulf Arab bank.

"Five years might see the bulk of rebuilding done, but some of it may go on for 10 years and more," he said.

Kuwait will have to borrow to cover the difference between the amount it needs immediately to pay for rebuilding and what it can find from current cash flows.

Estimates for both reconstruction costs and the amount of money left in the hands of Kuwait's government vary widely. Forecasts are therefore rough and ready.

The country's oil production is completely cut and Kuwaiti oil officials expect no crude exports for at least nine months.

Before the Iraqi invasion, Kuwait was producing 1.8 million barrels of oil per day.

## Price rises and political chaos halt meat supplies to Moscow

MOSCOW (R) — Impending price reform and political chaos in the Soviet Union have disrupted Moscow's meat supplies, emptying stores as local distributors and rebellious republics cut off sales.

Of about 1,200 meat shops in Moscow, once a city of relative plenty, 900 are empty, according to city officials.

"The delivery of meat to the city has virtually come to an end, and the 30,000 tonnes in storage may only be enough for one week," Yuri Luzhkov, said on Moscow Radio.

Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov announced two weeks ago that prices would be raised by an average 60 per cent, but gave no

date for the draconian move. The uncertainty has led suppliers in regions near Moscow to hold back deliveries.

"Larissa Soldatenkov," a meat plant manager, said supplies were scarce because 70 per cent used to come from Lithuania, now locked in a struggle for independence from the Soviet Union.

"Of course Lithuania has refused to sell their supplies," she said.

Other republics too have cut deliveries in the runup to a referendum on March 17 which will ask citizens if they want their republics to remain part of the Soviet Union.

"We receive meat only from Germany, but not from the re-

publics," said Klavdiya Polukarova, deputy manager of a meat store in central Moscow.

Shortages of meat, eggs, butter and vegetables reached crisis proportions last year. Despite plans for a market system, no mechanism has been introduced to replace the decaying centrally-planned economy.

Customers at a store in central Moscow said they roamed the streets each day searching for meat.

"The situation is worse than it was even one month ago," said Alexander, a 52-year-old engineer, in an empty meat shop.

The only effective recent measure was the introduction of higher contract prices between suppliers and retailers.

Some foods have doubled in price as a result, but items like eggs, caviar, and tomato sauce are returning to shop shelves.

President Mikhail Gorbachev said last week that Soviet industrial and food production had declined since the beginning of the year and tough decisions were needed to halt the economy's continuing tailspin.

He told Soviet television that an agreement between Moscow and the Soviet republics had failed to provide consumers with the food they needed.

"The crisis is for the moment, worsening. The situation at enterprises and commerce is such that all these issues have become urgent and require intervention and specific decisions," said Gorbachev, looking hesitant and visibly tired.

"For the first two months of 1991 food production was lower than set down in the agreement. And people of course feel this and see it on empty shop shelves," he pointed out.

A cabinet statement carried by the official TASS news agency said both production and national income, the chief indicator of Soviet economic performance, had fallen since the beginning of the year.

"These problems have been particularly compounded by the fall in the extraction and supply of oil to domestic and foreign markets," it said. "In addition, its price on world markets is falling sharply."

## Asian states said likely to become net oil importers

NUSA DUA, Indonesia (R) — South East Asia is likely to become a net importer of oil by the end of the decade because of rapid demand and no major oil discoveries, a leading industry official has said.

Sidney Reso, president of the U.S. company Exxon International, told a conference of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), that rising fuel consumption would boost oil demand in the region by more than three per cent a year.

This compared with only one per cent in the United States and Europe.

ASEAN groups Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand.

"Significant increases of oil supply are required to meet the demand and with the absence of very major discoveries the area will likely become a net importer of oil by the end of the decade," he said.

"Further discoveries are likely to be smaller and more complex geologically, requiring higher cost," Reso told the conference on the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

Indonesia, the region's oil producer and the only Asian member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has been trying to encourage oil firms to explore its more remote eastern regions.

The head of Indonesia's state oil firm Pertamina, Faisal Abda'oe, said Jakarta was promoting the use of other types of energy such as gas and coal in a bid to reduce domestic oil consumption.

He said Indonesia would maintain current oil and gas output of 2.5 million barrels per day (b/d) equivalent, 1.7 million b/d of which would be exported as crude oil, condensate, liquefied natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas.

"If we are successful ... I think there is a chance that we may be able to postpone the time when we will become a net oil importer," Abda'oe said.

He said the Gulf crisis had necessitated an increase in production to 1.67 million b/d from an original OPEC quota of 1.37 million.

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## Romania to abolish most foreign exchange restrictions next month

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP) — Officials have announced that most restrictions on foreign exchange in Romania would be abolished in a bid to heal the economy and curb the black market.

The move is part of a package recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which has agreed to provide Romania with about a billion dollars in aid on condition it swiftly acts to put a free market in place.

National Bank director Mugur Isarescu told a news conference that the first installment of the grant has arrived in the form of a \$300 million "bridging loan" from the Bank of International Settlements, which includes national banks of the major industrialised nations.

The U.S. Federal Reserve provided \$40 million as part of the loan, he said.

Isarescu announced that beginning in April non-commercial organisations and private individuals, both Romanian and foreign, would be permitted to trade foreign exchange through several authorized banks.

The National Bank began experimental hard-currency trading in February, but it was limited to

approved import-export companies. The rate of the Romanian leu currency on this market has fluctuated between 170 and 225 to the dollar, roughly equivalent to the black market rate.

The extension of the trading would have the effect of institutionalising the black market rate.

"This is the moment of the absorption of the black market," Isarescu said.

He said the official rate of 35 lei to the dollar will still be used in some cases. Importers will be required to sell half their hard-currency earnings to the state at the official rate before they can use the open market.

"This will be used to build up the foreign reserves and finance vital imports such as energy," Isarescu said.

He said other details of the plan, including whether tourists would be allowed to bypass the official rate, will be set in talks with the IMF later this month.

Tom Butler, the general manager of Manufacturers Hanover Trust in Romania, described the move as a "very important" for achieving internal convertibility — the ability to convert local currency into hard currencies within Romania.

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## Thousands march through Moscow in support of Yeltsin

MOSCOW (R) — Tens of thousands marched through central Moscow Sunday in support of Russian leader Boris Yeltsin who has declared war on Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The banner-waving crowd snaked around the city's garden ring road in bright sunshine towards the Kremlin walls for a rally organised by the Democratic Russia opposition group.

Many called for Gorbachev to resign and backed Yeltsin's latest appeal for an offensive against the Communist Party and Soviet leadership.

"Yeltsin, Yeltsin..." they shouted. "Down with the Communists."

Yeltsin, head of the Russian Federation, the biggest Soviet republic, declared war on Gorbachev Saturday, calling on radicals to form an organised party to challenge the Communists.

"Let's declare war on the leadership of the country, which has led us into a quagmire," the populist Russian president told radicals in a speech that drew a sharp response from the Communist establishment.

Sunday's march is the latest show of strength by Yeltsin's supporters at a time when he is under increasing fire from conservatives who accuse him of stirring up conflict.

Anatoly Lukyanov, the chairman of the Soviet parliament and a close ally of Gorbachev, denounced Yeltsin's remarks as alarming and inadmissible.

"Society is really white-hot and one match could set it on fire. The leader of the highest organ of power of a republic like Russia has no right, no moral right to make such statements," he told Soviet Television.

Such criticism has had little effect on the enthusiasm of the pro-Yeltsin demonstrators, who opposed a referendum on March 17 on whether to preserve the Soviet Union as a "renewed federation of equal sovereign republics."

Demonstrators held up slogans criticising the referendum and waved the red, white and blue pre-revolutionary Russian flag. There were also groups from the Ukraine and the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

With strains of the Russian national anthem carrying across the nearby Kremlin walls and into Red Square, the good-humoured crowd streamed into the city's Manezh Square to listen to speeches by radical politicians.

"Yeltsin is our hope," "no to Gorbachev's referendum," "we are for the union without Gorbachev" read some of the slogans.

Yeltsin, the country's most popular politician, was condemned by the Soviet parliament last month after a televised interview in which he demanded that Gorbachev resign for deceiving the people in five years of perestroika reforms.

He is likely to face another censure motion by the Soviet legislature Monday after Saturday's speech.

Conservatives in his own republican parliament are expected to try to oust him at an emergency meeting on March 28.

They have criticised him for undermining Gorbachev's attempts to unite the Soviet Union with a new union treaty redefining relations between the central government and republics.

Yeltsin says Russia is not ready to sign the treaty. The three Baltic republics and Georgia have also rejected it and are pushing for outright independence.

## Township tense after 19 killed in S. African fighting

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Police erected razor wire barricades around a workers' hostel in the tense Alexandra township Sunday in an effort to keep warring black groups apart after weekend battles that killed at least 19 people.

The South African Press Association said the death toll had reached 24 since Friday. A spokesman at the Alexandra police station refused to confirm this but said 19 bodies had been found and corpses still were being recovered.

Four more people died in the township of Tembisa, just north of Alexandra. Police said two people were killed Saturday and two Sunday. They did not say if the violence was connected to the Alexandra clashes.

They said another death occurred in the Inanda township of Natal province but gave few details.

Delegations of the rival African National Congress and Inkatha Freedom Party, whose supporters are behind the violence, scheduled a press conference for Sunday night in Alexandra to discuss efforts to end the fighting.

Police began mediating talks between the rival black groups Saturday night after the long-peaceful township became caught up in the black factional battles that have plagued the Johannesburg area since August.

Alexandra, which is surrounded by some of the city's more exclusive white neighbourhoods, had been virtually unscathed by the unrest until early Saturday, when supporters of the ANC and Inkatha groups clashed.

Police and soldiers in armoured vehicles moved into the dusty streets and tried to keep bands of chanting ANC and Inkatha supporters separated. A workers' hostel, the scene of some of Saturday's violence, was surrounded by razor wire to prevent residents from leaving and outsiders from entering. Women and children sought refuge in the township clinic.

Inkatha supporters who live in the hostel claimed they were attacked when they went to an ANC-dominated squatter camp after a Zulu was killed there Friday night. Residents of the squatter area alleged Inkatha members attacked them without provocation, shooting and hacking people.

Hostels, single-sex dormitory-like dwellings, house migrant workers and have been flashpoints for violence between the two groups.

No new incidents of violence were reported Sunday in Alexandra. In their morning unrest report, police said security forces were fired on six times Saturday afternoon and night.

## 3 Albanians reportedly die in storming of ship

VIENNA (R) — At least three Albanians were killed when troops stormed a ship crammed with refugees trying to flee to Italy, an opposition party spokesman said Sunday.

Gen. Pollo, of Albania's opposition Democratic Party, said the three died when troops with guns and tear gas boarded the ship stranded in Durres, the country's main port, Saturday.

"It's reported that two men and a two-year-old child choked on tear gas and an 18-year-old girl was seriously wounded and perhaps has died," Pollo said by telephone from Tirana.

His report could not be immediately confirmed. The Albanian News Agency (ATA) said Saturday 10 people were injured after the ship was cleared with the "energetic interference of the forces of order."

Pollo said many more could have been injured on the overcrowded boat.

Albania's Communist authorities, struggling to stem the third mass exodus from their country in nine months, last week declared Durres a military zone and banned "abnormal gatherings" in the two other ports and the capital, Tirana.

At least 15,000 Albanians, desperate to leave Europe's poorest state, have fled to the Italian port of Brindisi during the last week in ramshackle, overcrowded boats mostly commandeered from Durres Harbour.

The flood of new arrivals has overwhelmed Brindisi authorities and hundreds of Albanians have slept rough on a rain-drenched quayside before given squalid temporary accommodation in schools.

Inside the schools, conditions were squalid. On Sunday morning several had not received beds, sheets or blankets and refugees were sleeping on bare floors and desks.

## S. Africa to unveil land reform proposal Tuesday

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South African government will issue detailed proposals Tuesday to end apartheid in agriculture and reverse the white monopoly on farming land.

Officials said a government "white paper" on proposals for land reform and faster urban development would be published, the first concrete step towards the final demolition of apartheid.

Reformist President F.W. de Klerk said on Feb. 1 he would topple the last pillars of apartheid by June, when the parliament that still excludes blacks ends its current session.

He promised to repeal laws segregating suburbs and farmland as well as the system of race classification at birth.

Government sources said draft laws to scrap the 1913 and 1936 land acts, which reserve 87 per cent of the farmland for the white minority, would also be published this week.

Western government have promised to review their punitive sanctions against Pretoria when De Klerk introduces the apartheid-repeal bills and some

Gramoz Pasbko, founder member of the Democratic Party, said Durres was reported calm Sunday and that ships had begun to load and unload as usual.

Three senior United Nations officials will visit Tirana Monday for talks with the Albanian government on the surge of people trying to flee the country.

The office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Sunday the mission led by special envoy Staffan de Mistura had been invited by the Albanian government and would return to Geneva later in the week.

Asked how the U.N. could help, a UNHCR spokeswoman said: "We don't know, but we are very satisfied we can go there and find out what the problem is one the spot."

Nearly all the 15,000 Albanian refugees in Brindisi had been given shelter in school buildings by Sunday morning, most of them apparently determined not to return to their Communist homeland.

Buses shunted hundreds of refugees from docks and freight wagons, where they had lived since arriving by sea four days ago, to 36 requisitioned schools during the night.

The lack of organisation that has brought criticism of Italian authorities during the crisis continued. Several buses found schools closed and had to return to Brindisi's port area for new instructions.

Inside the schools, conditions were squalid. On Sunday morning several had not received beds, sheets or blankets and refugees were sleeping on bare floors and desks.

## 16-year-old arrested in killing of 2 boys

VIRGINIA BEACH, Virginia (AP) — A 16-year-old boy was charged with capital murder Saturday in the deaths of two youngsters whose bodies were found dumped in a wooded area near a lake, their throats slashed.

The bodies of 7-year-old Christopher Scott Weaver and his 9-year-old friend Daniel Geier were found Tuesday evening.

The bodies had been covered with leaves, sticks and pine branches. Police chief Charles R. Wall said the 16-year-old, who was not identified, was taken into custody Saturday.

He declined to say what led to the youth's arrest. The victims were last seen alive Monday afternoon. A half hour after they vanished, their abandoned bikes were found. The bodies were discovered nearby the next day. Residents shocked by the brutal slayings said they would continue to keep a close watch on their children. "I used to let my son run around in the playground, but not anymore," said Susan Mooney, 33. "You can't be too careful."

Reiner receives comedy award

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Carl Reiner, who has appeared on stage, television and films to make people laugh, was honoured Saturday for lifetime creative achievement at the American Comedy Awards. The award was presented by Reiner's son, director Rob Reiner, and actors Steve Martin and Kirstie Alley and longtime Reiner collaborator Mel Brooks.

Reiner, 69, has won Emmy Television Awards as an actor, writer and producer for such series as The Dick Van Dyke Show and the 1950s hit Caesar's Hour. He has also appeared on Broadway and written, directed, produced and appeared in a number of movies. Winners at the fifth annual event, which also honoured movie and television actors, were chosen by 1,000 comedy performers. The awards show at the Shrine Auditorium will be broadcast on April 3.

Actress to try marriage until she gets it right

NEW YORK (AP) — Twice-divorced Dyan Cannon says she'll "keep on trying marriage until I get it right." The 54-year-old actress said in the March 10 issue of "Parade" magazine that her first divorce, from the late Cary Grant, wasn't amicable. But they wound healed because of their daughter, Jennifer, now 25. "We celebrated holidays together because of her," said Cannon.

"Finally, it worked. Toward the end, Cary and I were again friends." And this time, she and her ex-husband, real estate developer Stanley Fumberg, are so friendly that they plan to share their tickets to Los Angeles Lakers basketball games.

Madonna gets her thrills by cleaning out lint

NEW YORK (AP) — There's no accounting how some people get their thrills. For Madonna, it was the mundane task of cleaning lint from the dryer after lovingly folding her ex-husband's underwear. The subject of laundry duty and former husband Sean Penn came up in a Vanity Fair magazine interview in which Madonna said she missed being married. "When I was married, I did the wash a lot," she said. "I liked folding Sean's underwear. I like making socks. You know that I love? I love taking the lint out of the lint screen." Speaking of the breakup of her 3-year marriage to the volatile Penn, Madonna said, "It's a big loss. But let's face it — Sean and I had problems. We had this high-visibility life and that had a lot to do with the demise of the marriage. When you're always being watched, you almost want to kill each other." She said she goes to the movies to watch Penn's work and admits feeling territorial about watching him on screen with other women — particularly in his latest movie which features Penn in sex scenes with his girlfriend and soon-to-be mother of his child, Robin Wright. Madonna says she would like to marry and have children. "You can have all the success in the world and if you don't have someone to love, it's certainly not as rewarding," she said. "The fulfillment you get from another human being — a child, in particular — will always dwarf people recognising you on the street."

## Papandreou to go on trial for corruption

ATHENS (R) — The biggest corruption trial in Greece this century opens Monday with former Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou charged with accepting thousands of dollars of bribes packed in nappy boxes.

Papandreou, 72, and three senior ministers in his defeated Socialist government will be tried by a special court set up by parliament in September 1989.

They face an array of criminal charges in connection with a \$200-million bank scandal which broke in 1988, including accepting bribes, receiving stolen money and breaching public faith in carrying out their duties.

Papandreou, who still leads the

Socialist Pasok Party and commands the diehard loyalty of 40 per cent of the electorate, is also charged with instigating a scheme to pocket millions of dollars in interest payments on state accounts.

If convicted, he may be sentenced to life imprisonment. A fiery populist speaker and bon viveur who divorced his American-born wife to marry a young air hostess, he scored a landslide election win in 1981 and became Greece's first Socialist prime minister. He ruled almost unchallenged for eight years and looked certain to coast to an easy third term in power.

Papandreou set up a vast welfare state, especially in the countryside where his building programmes and efforts to bring social services to rural areas brought a rock-solid following.

But a scandal at the private Bank of Crete in 1988 engulfed his government. Top ministers were dragged down or resigned in disgust over the affair, paralysing his government in its last year in power and leading to a crushing election defeat in June 1989.

Also on trial will be former Public Order Minister George Etsos, former Finance Minister Dimitris Tsoulas, and former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice Agamemnon Koutsouras.

## Lawmakers defy Walesa call for early elections

WARSAW (AP) — In President Lech Walesa's first major legislative defeat, parliament rejected his call to dissolve quickly and delayed Poland's first postwar free parliamentary elections until the fall.

By a vote of 314-18, with 10 abstentions, the lower chamber, or Sejm, decided to continue working through the summer and hold the elections by Oct. 30.

"The Sejm missed its chance and thus its credibility ended," said leaders of a pro-Walesa party, the Centre Alliance, in a statement issued after the vote.

"Poland should not be the last country in Europe without free elections," the statement said.

At the start of a three-day debate, Walesa called for early dissolving of the parliament, which has a strong contingent from the now-dissolved Communist Party, so that fully free elections could be held by May 26.

The president, elected in December, also asked for an electoral law that would assure strong political parties.

The pro-Walesa parliamentary caucus, the Citizens Parliamentary Club, proposed a resolution to allow elections in May. But the motion was overwhelmingly defeated by deputies from all other parties after a heated debate in which more than 80 deputies took the floor.

The current parliament, elected in June 1989, was formed according to the "round-table" agreement between the then-Solidarity-led opposition and the ruling Communists. Sixty-five per cent of the 460 Sejm seats were reserved for the Communist Party and its allies.

Formal Communist or Communist-allied deputies, who have only a slim chance of being re-elected, argued that the chamber has important tasks yet to fulfill. They also said there was insufficient time for an election campaign before a June visit to his homeland of Pope John Paul II and summer holidays.

In a letter to parliament Thursday, Walesa urged the deputies to recognise that their time had passed and proposed rules under which half of the Sejm would be elected in a winner-take-all system such as used in the United States.

There are bigger polling dangers. Elections in the world's most populous democracy cost millions of dollars and use up vast amounts of petrol. And India is short of both cash and fuel.

Campaign issues will probably include affirmative action for low castes in the Hindu hierarchy and Hindu militant claims to the site of a 16th century mosque in the northern town Ayodhya. More than 1,000 people died in 1990 in riots over these issues.

India's 850 million people include 100 million Muslims. Most of the rest are Hindus, their status based largely on caste.

Most analysts and diplomats believe these dangers, plus the probability of another bungled parliament, made the president slow to call an election.

Shekhar quit with vital parliamentary business, including the passage of an interim budget, unfinished. On Saturday, Venkataraman advised him he could stay on to pilot the budget through parliament Monday.

"The president believes — and he has a point — that let the essentials be dealt with, then he can dissolve parliament," said political commentator Nihal Singh.

## Tanks keep the peace in Belgrade after clashes

BELGRADE (R) — Tanks kept a tense peace in the Yugoslav capital Sunday after fierce clashes between riot police and tens of thousands of anti-Communist protesters in which two people were reported killed.

Dozens of tanks and armoured vehicles with rocket launchers and machine guns were sent into the streets and sealed off the city centre after several hours of fighting between police and about 70,000 protesters Saturday.

Burned out cars lined the streets and hundreds of shop windows were smashed after clashes in which police fired rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannon and protesters fought back with paving slabs and metal bars. Some streets were stained with blood.

A policeman died of head wounds and an 18-year-old protester was also killed, doctors said. They said at least 76 people were hurt, 20 seriously.

It was the worst violence in months of growing tension and nationalism among Yugoslavia's six republics and many ethnic groups that threatens the Balkan country with civil war and collapse as it slowly sheds 45 years of Communist rule.

Police arrested Vuk Draskovic, leader of the anti-Communist opposition in Serbia, the biggest republic and one of only two republics which retained their Communist rulers in elections last year. It said he had organised militant protests.

Draskovic's Serbian Democratic Renewal Movement (SDP) organised a protest against Communist control of the media in Serbia and clashes began after police moved in with water cannon, tear

gas and rubber bullets. Fighting spread to other parts of Belgrade and ended only after tanks moved into the city in the early evening, backed by several thousand riot police.

The Yugoslav presidency said it had sent in troops to keep order and guard key buildings such as the federal parliament at the request of the Serbian authorities.

"Because of the destructive demonstrations in Belgrade, in which firearms were used and there were casualties, the leadership of the Republic of Serbia asked the Yugoslav presidency to stop the brutal onslaught and violence of militant groups of demonstrators," a presidency statement said.

It was the first time tanks had been deployed in Belgrade since World War II and the violence was the worst there since then, local residents said.

Yugoslavia, created in 1918, was ruled after World War II by the iron grip of Communist leader Josip Broz Tito until his death in 1980. Since then, it has slid from one political and economic crisis to another.

The chaos has worsened since the six republics held free elections last year and four of them ended Communist rule.

The Serbian government, which met in emergency session, blamed the opposition for the unrest and accused it of abusing the introduction of parliamentary democracy in Serbia. It said charges would be brought against the organisers of the protests.

Belgrade radio quoted reports that Serbia may ban 12 opposition parties which it said helped organise the protests.

## Salvadoran rebels urge vote against ruling party

SAN SALVADOR (R) — Rebels in El Salvador have announced the start of their first electoral truce in a decade and urged voters to turn against the ruling rightist party in polls Sunday.

As election officials began placing the first of 6,450 ballot boxes in voting stations across the country, the rebels said their forces had withdrawn to bases deep inside guerrilla-dominated areas.

The rightist National Republican Alliance (Arena), which has an absolute majority in the National Assembly, is forecast to defeat the Christian Democrats and a leftist coalition in the legislative and municipal elections. Arena could take almost 30 per cent of the vote, opinion polls show.

Government troops and guerrilla fighters clashed fiercely near one rebel-dominated zone late Saturday, in the eastern village of San Francisco Javier in Usulután province.

Radio reports said the military was seeking to regain control of the village, 100 kilometres east of

San Salvador, in order to allow a polling booth to be set up there. Witnesses said they saw at least one soldier wounded.

The rebels have said they will defend their positions in zones they consider to be under their control and not allow voting in such places. The election truce, their first in a decade, would not stop them rebuffing army attacks.

There were no other immediate reports of fighting.

A rebel communiqué Saturday said "the people's army for democracy and its national militia" were observing a three-day truce and had "deployed at their bases." It added: "If the whole people votes, Arena will lose."

The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrilla movement, which has fought an 11-year war against successive U.S.-backed governments, condemned previous elections as illegitimate.

But a massive voter registration campaign has increased the number of eligible voters to 2.2 million from 1.8 million, official figures show.

## Awami League wins 3 more seats in Bangladesh elections

DHAKA (AP) — The centrist Awami League won three more parliamentary seats in repolling ordered after last month's elections, raising to 88 its strength in the 300-seat parliament, the election commission said.

The parliament remains dominated by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, led by Khaleda Zia, which won 138 seats. That is 13 seats short of the majority required by the constitution to form a government.

The fourth seat where repolling was held was won by the National Democratic Party, giving the party its only seat, the commission said in an announcement late Saturday.

The repolling was ordered following reports of voter intimidation or fraud.

The results will be published officially in a government gazette by Tuesday, the commission, a government body responsible for running elections, said.

Special notice is given to polls that say Quayle finishes nearly 20 points behind Gen. Colin Powell when Republicans are asked their preference for the 1992 vice presidential nomination.

Dump Quayle for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff? No way, says the Bush administration.

But Quayle critics worry that after two terms as vice president, Quayle will have a claim on the presidential nomination in 1996. And they say Quayle can't win in '96.

Mitch Daniels, a former White House political director, brushes off the criticism.

"All vice presidents face this," Daniels said. "But George Bush

proved they could not only surmount it, but do it very suddenly."

We're going to get used to Dan Quayle," as vice president, said scholar Stephen Hess of the Brookings Institution. "The problem then becomes contemplating him as president."

With approval ratings in the 85 per cent to 90 per cent range, Bush is riding high in the aftermath of the Gulf war. And Bush is the only person whose backing Quayle needs in 1992.

"A Bush-Quayle ticket is a lock-solid ticket in 1992," said White House Chief Staff of John Sununu.

Sununu also was asked whether Quayle's low standing in the polls was "a fair reflection of how the American people really feel about him."

His response was carefully worded: "I don't think it's a fair reflection of how effective a vice president Dan Quayle has been."

During the Gulf war, Bush went out of his way to have Quayle visibly involved. Often when the president had an important statement to make, Quayle was at his side, well within

Mrs. Zia is expected to seek support from smaller parties or independent candidates in order to form a coalition government. She and Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina are arch-rivals.

The Jatiya Party headed by deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad won 35 seats in the Feb. 27 polls.

So far, 298 election results have been announced. Elections for two seats have been delayed because of candidates' deaths.

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During the Gulf war, Bush went out of his way to have Quayle visibly involved. Often when the president had an important statement to make, Quayle was at his side, well within

camera range.

Yet the same polls that showed Bush with overwhelming approval, showed widespread public disaffection with his vice president.

A Washington Post-ABC News poll published last week found Bush's approval rating at 90 per cent. At the same time, 49 per cent said they thought Quayle would not be qualified to take over as president.



Dan Quayle